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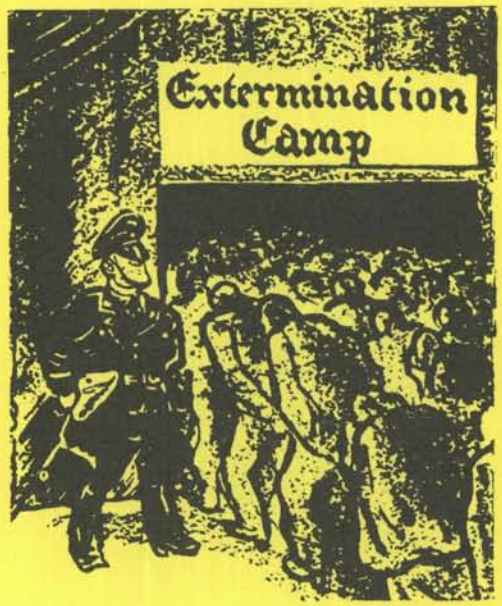

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Philip Abrams
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Edited by Melvin J. Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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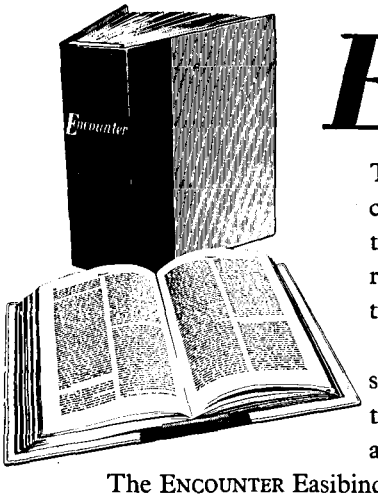

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Florence C. Lewis

Like This A Woman Dreams

A MAN COMES HOME from work, his day at the office only God can appreciate, and what does he come home to, a boy, only Harry Krishna knows what goes on in his head, incense he burns, and a wife, she's watching television, a re-run yet. Nobody says hello to me, not even a wink. I take off my shoes, I mix an Alka Seltzer I should have it ready, I go to the refrigerator to find a cold supper, and I sit by myself and eat. Do I know what I'm eating? Does anyone ask me what kind of day I've had, what aggravation is new? Finally, Myron, my son, comes out of his room.

"Peace, Pops", he says to me.

"Go to hell", I tell him.

Peace yet. You would think he was some kind of guru, like he has to tell me peace, as if I made a war which he isn't gonna fight or register for, he's gonna send me instead.

And the telephone rings. It's for Miriam, she won't answer, tell whoever is calling, she should call back. I sit down back again to my cold salmon. Again the telephone rings before I get the lousy fork in my mouth, only this time I shove it in, the fork and I don't answer the phone, let it ring, I should be a telephone answering service. So the phone rings and I don't move. Miriam finally yells, "Moe, are you deaf? Answer the phone." Before I answer the phone I say to her, she should know I'm alive.

"I'm happy you know I'm home."

The phone stops ringing before I can reach it because I take my time, and when the re-run is over, do I get it from Miriam because how will she know who it was on the telephone. And the rest of the night she doesn't talk to me. I'm in bed by myself by ten o'clock, but Miriam is on the phone calling up all her friends, asking them did they call her. From what I pick up, no they didn't call her because they were watching what she was watching. I hear the word, Saga. Saga. Saga.

Breakfast I get myself always—coffee, grapefruit, and Alka Seltzer, and Myron has already left for a demonstration before school starts, and his dishes are on the counter I should rinse them off. I call goodbye to Miriam, and my day begins with mild aggravation. At the post office the aggravation gets heavier. You see we got in a new special issue stamp. Myself, one stamp is like another but for some people, no they gotta have special issue. Why? An ordinary stamp makes them ordinary like they don't show off with fancy cars, they show off with fancy stamps. You see what I mean?

One lady, a retired school teacher, I had her myself in Junior High School, she's one of those who come in for new stamps, special issue. All the time. Crazy. Even in the old days, she was two inches from a straitjacket. For arithmetic I had her. All we learned in her class was interest and discount and fire insurance, we should all become accountants. So when Miss Feibusch comes to buy stamps, I always have to hear from her how much she's going to make money on collector's items like special issue stamps with the numbers attached when they become antique, she and the stamps. But let her live and be well. When she asks for me, I always go to the wicket and get her the special issue. She calls me Moe Poppenstein, she can't remember my name. On this particular morning she comes in for the conservation stamp, and I look for the stamp, and where are the stamps? We can't find the stamps, a whole pad, twenty pages, disappeared like that. So where are they? The part-time help is tearing up the place looking for the stamps. Then suddenly I know in my heart where they are.

Conservation? Who's all for conservation in the abstract and dirt in the particular? Simpson is sitting on the stamps, that lousy hippie, a joint he carries in his lunch-pail, he's off the big stuff now, we should all be

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grateful. Simpson makes out he doesn't know he's sitting on the stamps. He's saving them for his friends, they all look like pumpernickel mould but they've got money for stamps and health foods. I can't even press charges against Simpson for present offences and past felonies because he's a mixture of too many minorities, I would have fourteen organisations after me including the B'nai Brith. So I don't say a word, I pull out the stamps from under his behind, and I try to make a joke to Miss Feibusch. I tell her we try to keep her stamps warm.

"This younger generation", she starts off.

"Too much television", I tell her. Who wants to start in on how it used to be in school when she was crazy in the good old days.

"The wrong programmes. They should all be forced to watch the Forsyte Saga."

"What, that lousy Victorian soap opera?", yells Simpson, and people are in line waiting for money-orders and mailing packages, and they have to listen to Feibusch cursing Simpson and Simpson spitting through his beard at Feibusch in a crazy accent which is supposed to be Cockney.

"I forbid you to mock the Forsytes", Feibusch yells, holding her hand up like the Statue of Liberty on Ellis Island.

"What's a Four Side Saga?" a little kid asks his mother, and the show is busted up. After lunch, and what is lunch I ask you, another piece of cold salmon and a Dr Pepper and two Tums and a piece of swiss cheese, I call Simpson into my office. I ask him how come conservation stamps should land on his chair. I'm not accusing him of anything, I'm asking, mind you.

"Look, man, I don't know everything."

"But you know about the Forsyte Saga, and you don't even have a television set."

"Man, you can't escape it. It's on the only good channel. What you gonna do? My chick has TV."

Go talk to a lunatic. Don't ask. I tell him his face is going to end up on a mug shot on the post office walls one day.

"That don't bother me, man. They're all heroes."

THE REST OF THE WEEK, I'm nervous, not about stamps in the post office, you see what I mean, but Miriam and that TV programme of hers. On Saga night, I'm home early and I help with the dishes and she's uptight like a baked potato. I sit down with her on the couch after dinner. Watch! I can't sit next to her. She wants me to leave the living-room. She tells me to go to the movies. I change my seat, and I look at her, I give her such a look, it should go right to her heart and come out on the other side. She makes like I don't exist. But I stay. I don't budge.

I happen on that night to catch a story about a nice-looking old-fashioned broad called Irenee with two ee's who is having an affair with an architect who looks like a cockroach, and when her husband finds out, he lets her have it. It appears she has not been letting her husband have it. He gets sore. He tears her clothes off. And out comes half a bosom. This is not bad for television. And the next week, I don't mind telling you, I am ready for the next instalment. Don't ask. But I don't take it seriously. The next instalment, Irenee leaves her husband because, get this, he raped her. And if this isn't crazy enough, the men, all except the husband who has some sense, go around wearing sackcloth, and sitting Shiva and beating their breasts, he raped her. The architect too, he didn't. The husband did. Commotion and cries of woe but for what I ask you, and finally the crazy architect gets run over by a carriage, not a baby carriage, a regular carriage with horses. And he dies. You should see Miriam's face. I take one look at her, and I begin to laugh. Out loud. Miriam looks at me like she has a secret disease which is killing her slowly, and she's trying to look brave for me.

"Myron", she starts crying, "come and get your father out of the living-room. Myron, please." And silver-fin Myron leaves his candelabra and poster hideaway to come and remove me from the premises.

"Don't hang around where you're not wanted, Pops", he tells me. And he marches me out like a dog, a stray dog, an orphan. And for what!

NEXT THERE ARE ALL KINDS of plots to get me out of the house on Saga nights like I have to go to Meyer's house to play pinochle. Or there is no bread in the house all of a sudden because Miriam knows that the bakery man likes to schmooze with me a little so I have to go buy bread at eight

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o'clock when the store is closing and if I fix her wagon and make sure we have four loaves of bread in the house, suddenly there is no milk. All of this I wouldn't even mind if it weren't so obvious that she doesn't want me around while she's having a love affair with the television set. It hurts me. You see what I mean, all her life a sensible woman and if I even sound English like I say to her—Pass me a scone instead of a bagel, she gets this hurt, flustered look in her eyes—and finally one night Meyer, her own brother, gets thrown out of his house for the same reason, and he comes to see me, and Miriam throws us both out and tells us to go to the public library together like we're schoolboys. Here I put my foot down and I turn off the TV set.

"I live here too", I tell Miriam. I'm really only kidding.

"Yeh", says Meyer. He's trying to help out, which he shouldn't. Miriam gets off the couch, looks at us like she never saw us before, she's such a princess from off the Empire State Building, and she goes into Myron's room which is unoccupied and slams the door. She has permission to visit his room, I don't when he's out. Meyer and I sit down on the couch in the living-room, and I try to be nonchalant, and I fix Meyer a Manischevitz and Seltzer drink and for me just the seltzer with an alka which I throw in, and we sit on the couch and burp together.

Meyer says to me, "I never saw such craziness in my life for a television programme. Why don't they let us watch? Are we intruding into private lives? What's so special anyway about a verkokte love story when the world is exploding around us and hearts are breaking every way you turn?"

"And there's a war on that they can't finish and an idiot in the White House", I help out by saying.

Meyer now says to me, "Moe. Toby cries after these shows—she cries like a baby."

And would you believe what I'm gonna tell you. Twenty-five years I know this man, and he starts telling me what trouble he's having with his wife. Sexwise. In my eyes, sex is something only a woman is supposed to complain about and to another woman, and here is Meyer Peltz, a hard-working insurance man with varicose veins and piles and my own brother-in-law telling me about Toby, his wife, who watches the Forsyte Saga and cries out in bed that she never lived. Next to her husband he should have aggravation, she cries and cries.

"What should I do?" Meyer asks me. "Take lessons?"

"From who—who's gonna teach you?"

"Listen, Moe, there's a clinic where they show you how. . . ."

"Don't talk nonsense", I tell him, because frankly I don't mind telling you I don't want to hear.

"Moe, listen to me, they show you how."

"How, what are you talking? You're a man. You don't know how? All these years and you don't know how? What are you talking? What have you been doing your whole married life, playing doctor?"

"Moe, Toby don't have orgasm."

"Women aren't supposed to, not at Toby's age."

"She never had."

"So if she never had, she can't have now,"

"That's not what the books say—didn't you ever read a book about a full sex life? Women are supposed to have a full sex life as much as a man."

It's a lucky thing I have my Alka Seltzer in front of me because this kind of talk murders me. I'm not against women having everything their little hearts desire but I should worry over Miriam and a full sex life when every waking minute I'm wondering if my son is going to get through college or become a fairy or go to jail or blow his mind, I should wonder is my wife having orgasm—you gotta be crazy or else you can't have anything better on your mind. And Meyer is here next to me blabbing about Toby.

"Moe, listen to me", he blabs.

I'm listening, I'm listening, but I can't stand it so I bust in,

"Listen, Meyer, Toby has a home, three children, they should live and be well, all from you, you make a good living. She goes to Puerto Rico once a year—what does she need orgasm?"

"She says she wants it before she dies."

Miriam comes in to blow her nose, she's been crying and maybe listening, so we get out of the living-room and we turn on the TV set for her in time to hear that Irenee is going to have a baby from a third man, not her husband, not the architect who is now

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dead and buried but a man with a beard who's been married three times and has had children from each woman.

I tell Meyer finally—

"Listen, Meyer, women with kids, they don't need orgasm. Toby is almost a grandmother. Tell her to stop complaining."

Meyer goes home. Somehow he's feeling better. Talk helps. Miriam sits on the couch still blowing her nose, waiting for Myron to get home so she can complain against me, and the phone rings—it's Simpson. He's telling me he's sick and won't be in to work the next day.

"You sound fine to me."

"But I just found out—I have syphilis. And I want to go get shots."

"Why don't you just sweat it out?" I ask him. "Shots are for babies. What's a little syphilis?" I don't mean it. Believe me. I'm only kidding.

"No", he says, "your hair falls out. I like my hair long, man."

I HANG UP THE PHONE. A roar in my head like a subway train is coming through. Don't ask. Then Myron hot cakes comes home, kisses his mother, gives me the peace sign, which always ties me up into knots, Peace I should have. He pours himself a drink of celery and carrot juice over ice, over ice yet, and sits down.

"How's the Saga?" he asks Miriam.

"Your father turned it off."

"Why did you do that, Pops?"

I'm too worked up from Simpson's phone call to reply. Cool—cold—collected I tried to be. I didn't faint on the telephone when he gave me the good news, but syphilis in the post office? My post office, and Simpson's friends always hanging around, using the john because God knows, they would do it on the street and who knows if the whole office isn't infected and I have to worry why did I turn off the television? Pain, I got, don't ask.

"Listen, Shark Fin, this is my house and your bird-nest mother don't let me live around here."

"It's just one hour a week that I ask for privacy."

"What's so private that I can't watch too. It's a stupid love story, what's so special?"

And Miriam starts in how I don't understand and that works on me so hard that my whole system gets tied up in plugs and the gas doubles me over and I have to take a hot bath, you should pardon me. I tell myself that the next time that lousy show comes on, I won't even come home. I'll find a nice Chinese restaurant and have dinner by myself I'll show them. Only the idea of eating by myself makes me feel so terrible, I almost start crying in the bathtub, don't ask. It's like commiting suicide alone.

When I step out of the bathtub I almost trip on the rubber mat yet and have a heart attack. Miriam is asleep or pretending, so she doesn't hear the way I almost fall, but Myron hears and he helps me out, gets me my bathrobe and so forth. I sit down by the kitchen table and Myron gives me a glass of milk with a little seltzer in it.

"Drink it, Pops."

I drink. I drink.

"A lousy television show and she cries", I say to the electric clock on the wall and Myron.

"Drink your milk, Pops."

I drink. I drink.

"What does your mother want?" I ask him.

"She has her dreams. You have dreams? She has dreams."

"Myron, don't talk crazy. My dreams are not for myself. They're all for you. My dreams are not for me. What are your mother's dreams? She wants to go back to World War I when she was in a baby carriage? That's not a dream. A dream is for the future. You see what I mean."

"I see what you mean. Drink your milk."

I finish my milk.

"You feel better now?"

"Yeh, yeh."

"I'll go to bed then."

I pull myself up like I'm a cripple and I pat him on his long hair for helping me out and I tell him to put out the lights.

"Make love, not war, Pops", he says to me.

I think I hear him say this, I'm not sure. But embarrass him in case he didn't, I don't want to do that, so I pretend I didn't hear. Maybe it's not a bad idea that I should make love to Miriam. Only I have too much gas. And I'm too aggravated from the Saga. And I'm worried about syphilis in my post office. Go make love yet! It's easier to make war. You see what I mean!

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Bruno Bettelheim

The Holocaust

Some Reflections, a Generation Later

My business is not with the dead, but with the living. The events of the Nazi holocaust are by now an appropriate subject for historians. My concern is with its significance for the present generation. They should not distort the meaning the holocaust carries just because of the terrible things which were done by average people to average persons one short generation ago, but because of the warning it holds for man today.

It is understandable that we wish to avoid coping with the deeply disturbing perspectives on man which the holocaust opens up: man as a wanton destroyer, and as a victim shorn of all defences. The appalling nature of that which we ought to understand and build into our view of the world as a terrible warning induces us to avoid facing the true nature of the problem by denying some of its most upsetting aspects, and by distorting others.

All this is hardly new. From the very beginning of the long series of events which we now call the Nazi holocaust, the psychological mechanisms used to deal with it have not been recognition of the facts, correct assessments and interpretations of their implications, and mastery of the event on this basis. Instead we have used various distancing devices, false analogies, and forms of outright denial, so as not to have to come to grips with a grim reality.

Denial is the earliest, most primitive, most inappropriate and ineffective of all psychological defences used by man. When the event is potentially destructive, it is the most pernicious psychological defence, because it does not permit taking appropriate action which might safeguard against the real dangers. Denial therefore leaves the individual most vulnerable to the very perils against which he tried to defend himself.

BRUNO BETTELHEIM *belongs to that small and remarkable group of European refugees who made their mark in American science and scholarship over the last several generations. Dr Bettelheim was until recently Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of Chicago and the head of its residential treatment centre for severely emotionally disturbed children, the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School. He was born in 1903, educated at the University of Vienna, and after a brief imprisonment in Dachau and Buchenwald was able to flee to the USA, in 1939. Among his books are two scientific studies,* Love is Not Enough *(1950) and* Truants from Life *(1955).*

ONE JEWISH SURVIVOR of the concentration camps reported recently on the TV news that she "did not know about the camps" at the time she was transported there from her native Hungary. This is dubious because, from the very beginning of Nazism in 1933, Hitler and all Nazis declared most publicly and innumerable times that they would make Germany *Judenrein* —that they would clean all Jews out of Germany and all the other countries to fall under their power. The Nazis further declared that if there were a war, at its end no Jew would remain alive in Europe.

Actual abuse and vilification of the Jews existed from the moment the Nazis came into power, and even before. The Nazis propagandised information about the concentration camps, and used them deliberately as a threat to intimidate and subdue their opponents, and even their followers, when they showed any sign of independent opinion. This was so much so that a much-quoted saying sprung up: "*Lieber Gott, mach mich stumm, dass ich nicht nach Dachau komm* (Dear Lord, please make me mute, so that I won't be sent to Dachau). . . . "

Therefore, when after the War some Germans claimed that they had not had any knowledge of the concentration camps—about which they had read so often in their daily papers as a warning not to transgress Nazi rules—then this was either an outright lie, or due to their wish not to have known what they could easily have known, but which they (unconsciously) chose not to know. In this context it must be remembered that denial, even when it begins as a conscious process, soon becomes an unconscious one; otherwise it could never work so well, and so completely.

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While the concentration camps were public knowledge, the extermination camps were treated more like a poorly-kept secret. Poorly-kept, because it had been publicly announced that no Jew would be left in Europe after the War. Poorly-kept, because anybody who wanted to find out about the extermination camps could do so—too many people were involved—and no news was ever received from or about those who were sent there. Neutral embassies, the Vatican, and many others including the American and the other Allied governments were well informed about them. Thus knowledge about the extermination of the Jews could be gained, and many efforts were made to spread this knowledge amongst Jews. Still, officially the extermination camps were treated as something to be kept secret, and there is an interesting reason for this.

Actually, the systematic extermination of the Jews began after Stalingrad, when it had become obvious that Germany would lose the War. It then became evident to the Nazis that the very widespread but until then somewhat haphazard killing of Jews would not eliminate them all before the War ended. Had Germany won the War, the extermination would probably have proceeded more slowly, since a programme of sterilising all Jewish men or women, or both, was very seriously considered—and it included letting those already alive die out slowly through natural death, while taking advantage of them as slave labourers until then. This, too, would have achieved the purpose of making Europe "free of Jews." But with the defeat at Stalingrad, the "Final Solution (*Endlösung*)" of the Jewish problem proceeded in the extermination camps and their gas chambers.

THE FIRST USE of the gas chambers was not the elimination of Jews, but in the so-called Euthanasia Programme: the elimination of those the Nazis considered "misfits"—mental defectives and inmates of psychiatric hospitals. These were the first group to be systematically killed off, quite a few of them in the first mobile gas chambers. Although this programme of extermination was camouflaged—initially, it was claimed that some new, potentially dangerous treatment would be tried out on these people, which had some chance of success although it entailed serious risk of death, etc.—it soon became known what was really going on. There was such a strong reaction against this slaughter of mental patients among religious leaders and the common people that, despite massive propaganda and much against their desires, the Nazis had to discontinue this important part of their official eugenic programme. This surely illustrates that when unpleasant facts are not dealt with by means of denial but are faced squarely, even the most ruthless totalitarian régime can be forced to back down through determined public action.

No such public, widespread objection made itself heard about the persecution of the Jews, or about the random killing of large masses of Jews, or even the extermination of all of them. Quite the opposite happened. If anything, the German people seemed in their overwhelming majority either to applaud the persecution of the Jews, or to condone it by act of omission; however a very few isolated voices were raised against it.[1] These few voices could easily be suppressed and disregarded by the Government, since they found no following.

To some measure the absence of opposition was due to the massive anti-Semitic propaganda, and to the fact that the screws were at first tightened slowly. It would be tedious to retrace here the steps by which the Jews were first made second-class citizens, then robbed of all their citizens' rights, prevented from exercising their professions, then prevented from earning anything, banned from public gatherings, their children excluded from school; how Jews were first publicly ridiculed, then beaten up, jailed, and finally put into the camps.

For a time, these measures were differentially

[1] Today, after all these years, it is easily forgotten how many Germans—by no means only Nazis—derived tangible advantages from the persecution of the Jews. Their vast majority either owned business enterprises or held lucrative positions; nearly all owned nice homes. They were deprived of these which were handed over to Germans. Before the War, when Jews emigrated they could take none of their possessions with them; and the same was true during the War when they were first sent to the ghettos in Poland, and later into the camps. Rather than see the Nazis gain all their possessions, on being forced to leave, most Jews preferred to give their art objects, jewellery, valuable furniture and clothing (and what not else) to gentile acquaintances, either as presents, or for safe keeping. The end results were nearly always the same, since the Jews died in the camps, and nobody was left to claim what was left in safe keeping.

With Jewish enterprises or positions going to one gentile German family, their homes to another, their possessions to again three or four others, at least five or more German families profited from the persecution of a single Jewish family. This was a good enough reason for them, if not happy to be, at least not to object to a policy which enriched them without any effort on their part.

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applied (for example, those who had served in the First World War were exempted from some of them). At each step, the Jews could delude themselves that as terrible as the hardships imposed on them were getting, they could somehow live with them. With each regulation they could fool themselves into believing that this was the last step in putting them down. While at first they had thought that the threats were mere propaganda to gain new followers for the Nazi party and satisfy old ones, soon this proved incorrect. As the hardships became more severe, the greater became the Jews' need to take protective actions. But unfortunately for many, the protective actions they took consisted of engaging in denial, in order not to give up or to fall into despair or to commit suicide. With each new and harsher treatment—abuse, beatings, deportations—the Jews were pushed into two opposite groups.

THOSE WHO DID NOT engage in denial but could see things for what they were became ever more convinced that their only safety resided in escape. While up to a point in their mistreatment they had been willing to suffer rather than give up all they possessed, they came to realise that giving up almost everything dear to them, including all material things, was a small and necessary price to pay for mere survival. Most of them managed to escape, although some were later overtaken by the German occupation of the countries to which they had fled.

By contrast, those who engaged in denial tried to tell themselves that things couldn't, or wouldn't, get any worse; that the bark of the Nazis, bad as it was, was worse than their bite; that while some other Jews were taken to the camps they, for some reason or other, would be saved from such a fate. With each new hardship, the need for denial increased and extended over wider areas in order to be able to keep it up. That is why, in the end, these Jews did not know what they could easily have known, had they not blinded themselves to make the unsufferable seem sufferable.

For example, some Jews managed to escape and make their way back to Warsaw; they warned others that in the camps Jews were being killed. They were berated for spreading such rumours and told to remain quiet, because what the Jews needed was to be comforted, not worried even more. The reason for not listening to the warning voices, for disregarding the writing on the wall which was there for all to read, was the wish to continue with denial of what was taking place.

IF SUCH BEHAVIOUR seems strange, consider the well-known fact that terminal cancer patients typically meet their fate with one of two opposite states of mind. Those who face what is in store for them with clarity soon also gain considerable equanimity of mind. They do everything that can be and needs to be done, realising how little time they have left to do so. But the majority, the closer they come to their end, deny even more insistently that this is so. They claim that they are getting better, making ambitiously large and unrealistic, even delusional, plans and arrangements for their future.

If a terminal cancer patient engages in massive denial, this does not change what is going to happen to him, although it makes it easier for him to live through his ordeal, which was the unconscious purpose for engaging in the denial. But when Jews under Hitler engaged in denial for the same basic reason—to make their ordeal more bearable—the consequence for them was nearly always fatal. Had they not blinded themselves to their reality, these Jews may well have saved themselves. Their denial prevented their trying to arrange an escape, or going underground and thus possibly saving themselves, or preparing to fight back, for example, by joining partisan groups.

Such denial was not restricted to the Jews of Europe, who at least had the excuse of terrible straits for using such a desperate and ineffective psychological defence. But it was also the characteristic attitude of the whole West, very much including the USA. Most nations which engaged in such denial did so mainly out of self-interest. From 1933 until the beginning of the War—for over six years—the Nazis were more than ready to let the Jews go; as a matter of fact, they tried everything to get rid of the Jews, provided they left all their belongings behind. But no country, including the USA, let more than an entirely insignificant trickle immigrate into it. The justification was again denial: things were not all that bad for the Jews; the Nazis did not really mean what they said, etc.

Later, after the extermination policy had already begun, and after the US government knew about it, the Nazis offered American Jewish groups a clandestine deal: they would let the Jews go, if they received in payment for them a number of vehicles. (First they had asked for war-material, but accepting that this was impossible, had reduced their request to trucks.) When American negotiators raised the question of how they could trust Germany to keep her promise, the Nazis offered a down-payment. Without it being suggested or requested by the Americans, the Nazis delivered, "free of charge", a train load of Jews into Switzerland to prove that Jews were of no value to them, that all they wanted was to get rid of them. After that, when it was obvious that the Nazis meant business, the

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negotiations were broken off because the American government would not permit the deal.[2]

It could be argued that the trucks would have helped the Nazi war efforts. But even before the War started, a shipload of German Jews had arrived at the American coast, but were not permitted to land. They were ultimately returned to Europe, where most of them later perished, being again caught by the Nazis in the countries where they had found refuge. In 1939 a bill was introduced in the US Congress which tried to save at least some German-Jewish children by permitting 10,000 of them to immigrate in 1939–40 under a special quota (the Wagner-Rogers Child Refugee Bill). They would not have created a glut on the labour market; they were all under fourteen years of age, and would have been taken in by American-Jewish families of means who were ready to raise them as they did their own children, guaranteeing that they would not become an economic liability. President Roosevelt refused to endorse the bill despite repeated urging to do so on the part of the American-Jewish community. Because of his and of Congressional lack of interest the Bill died in the Congressional judiciary committees. These refusals to save the doomed Jews were greatly facilitated by a widespread denial of what fate had in store for them, although the Nazis had made their intentions amply clear.

THE REASON FOR ALL THIS is that it is easier to deny reality, when facing it would require taking unpleasant, difficult, or expensive actions. Not to take such actions out of self-interest would evoke guilt feelings. So that one need not feel guilty for not acting, one denies the facts. Thus denial makes life easier, at least for the moment, and if one does not care what the consequences of such denial are for oneself or for others.

Denial, as I have mentioned before, is the most primitive of all psychological defensive mechanisms. The small child, confronted with something unpleasant, will insist that it is not so. Usually as we get older, we no longer use this primitive defence when confronted with incontrovertible facts. But when anxiety becomes overwhelming, even normal adults tend to regress to using this primitive defence. That is why Jews under Nazi domination, in the face of obvious facts but in mortal anxiety, engaged in denial so massive that under other circumstances it would have been considered delusional.

Americans, as well as others in the West, denied the reality of the extermination camps as the simplest way to avoid facing an unpleasant truth. When they could no longer blind themselves to what thousands had seen with their own eyes, Americans began to apply more subtle and devious defensive mechanisms to avoid facing what the Holocaust had been like. Imagining it would have meant experiencing it to some measure. Better to declare it unimaginable, unspeakable, because only then could one avoid facing the full horror of what had happened in its details which would be extremely upsetting, guilt-provoking, and anxiety-creating. These more subtle psychological defensive mechanisms still dominate many present-day approaches to the true significance of the Holocaust.

TO BEGIN WITH, it was not the hapless victims of the Nazis who named their incomprehensible and totally unmasterable fate *the Holocaust*. It was the Americans who applied this artificial and highly technical term to refer to the Nazi extermination of the European Jews. But while the event—mass murder most foul—when thus named evokes the most immediate, most powerful revulsion, when it is designated by a rare technical term, we must first in our mind translate it back into emotionally meaningful language. Using technical or specially created terms instead of words from our common vocabulary is one of the best-known and most widely-used distancing devices, separating the intellectual from the emotional experience. Talking about "the Holocaust" permits us to manage it intellectually, where the raw facts, when given their ordinary names, would overwhelm us emotionally—because it was catastrophe beyond comprehension, beyond the limits of our imagination, unless we force ourselves against our desires to extend it to encompass these terrible events.

This linguistic circumlocution began while it all was only in the planning stage. Even the Nazis—usually given to grossness in language and action—shied away from facing openly what they were up to and called this vile mass murder *die Endlösung* ("the final solution") of the Jewish problem. After all, to solve a problem can be made to appear like an honourable enterprise, as long as we are not forced to recognise that the solution we are about to embark on consists of the completely unprovoked, vicious murder of millions of helpless men, women, and children. The Nuremberg judges of the Nazi criminals followed their example of circumlocution by coining a neologism out of one Greek and one Latin root: *genocide*. These artificially created technical terms fail to connect with our strongest

[2] For details of these negotiations as well as for the shipload of refugees who were not permitted to land in the US, see, Arthur D. Morse, *While Six Million Died: A Chronicle of American Apathy* (1968).

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feelings. The horror of murder is part of our most common human heritage. From earliest infancy on, it arouses violent abhorrence in us. Therefore, in whatever form it appears, we should give such an act its true designation and not hide it behind polite, erudite terms created out of classical words.

To call this vile mass murder *The Holocaust* is not to give it a special name emphasising its uniqueness, which would permit, over time, the word becoming invested with feelings germane to the event it refers to. The correct translation of "holocaust" is a burnt offering. As such, it is part of the language of the psalmist, a word full of meaning to all who have some acquaintance with the Bible, full of the richest emotional connotations. By using the term holocaust, entirely false associations are established through conscious and unconscious connotations between the most vicious of mass murders, and ancient rituals of a deeply religious nature.

Using a word with such strong unconscious religious connotations when speaking of the murder of millions of Jews robs the victims of this abominable mass murder of the only thing left to them: their uniqueness. Calling the most callous, most brutal, most horrid, most heinous mass murder a burnt offering is a sacrilege, a profanation of God and man.

MARTYRDOM is part of our religious heritage. A martyr, burned at the stake, is a burnt offering to his god. And it is true that after the Jews were asphyxiated the victims' corpses were burned. But I believe we fool ourselves that we are honouring the victims of systematic murder by using this term, which has the highest moral connotations. By doing so, we connect for our own psychological reasons what happened in the extermination camps with historical events we deeply regret, but also greatly admire. We do so because this makes it easier for us to cope, only in doing so we cope with our distorted image of what did happen, not with the events in the way they did happen.

By calling the victims of the Nazis "martyrs", we falsify their fate. The true meaning of martyr is: "One who voluntarily undergoes the penalty of death for refusing to renounce his faith" (*Oxford Dictionary*). The Nazis made sure that nobody could mistakenly think that their victims were murdered for their religious beliefs. Renouncing their faith would have saved none of them. Those who had converted to Christianity were gassed, as were those who were atheists, as were those who were deeply religious Jews. They did not die for any conviction, and certainly not out of choice.

Millions of Jews were systematically slaughtered, as were untold other "undesirables", not for any convictions of theirs, but only because they stood in the way of the realisation of an illusion. They neither died for their convictions, nor were they slaughtered because of their convictions, but only in consequence of the Nazis' delusional belief about what was required to protect the purity of their assumed superior racial endowment, and what they thought necessary to guarantee them the "living space (*Lebensraum*)" they believed they needed and were entitled to. Thus while these millions were slaughtered for an idea, they did not die for one.

Millions—men, women, and children—were "processed" after they had been utterly brutalised, their humanity destroyed, their clothes torn from their bodies. Naked they were sorted into those who were destined to be murdered immediately, and those others who had a short-term usefulness as slave labour. But after a brief interval they, too, were to be herded into the same gas chambers into which the others were immediately piled, there to be asphyxiated so that, in their last moments, they could not help fighting each other in vain for a last breath of air.

To call these most wretched victims of a murderous delusion, of destructive drives run rampant, martyrs or a burnt offering is a distortion invented for our comfort, small as it may be. It pretends that this most vicious of mass murders had some deeper meaning; that in some fashion the victims either offered themselves, or at least became sacrifices to a higher cause. It robs them of the last recognition which could be theirs, denies them the last dignity we could accord them: to face and accept what their death was all about, not embellishing it for the small psychological relief this may give us.

We could indeed feel so much better if the victims had acted out of choice. For our emotional relief, therefore, we dwell on the tiny minority who did exercise some choice: the resistance fighters of the Warsaw ghetto, for example, and others like them. We are ready to overlook that these people fought back only at a time when everything was lost, when the overwhelming majority of those who had been forced into the ghettos had already been exterminated without resisting. Certainly those few who finally fought for their survival and their convictions, risking and losing their lives in doing so deserve our admiration; their deeds give us a moral lift. But the more we dwell on these few, the more unfair are we to the memory of the millions who were slaughtered—who gave in, did not fight back—because we deny them the only thing which up to the very end remained uniquely their own: their fate.

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THERE ARE BOOKS and other publications which try to present the facts, so that we may know what has happened. There are other writings which search for the meaning of these terrible events; and they have sometimes been given poetic form. Others expressed the guilt of the survivors, the mourning for the deceased. Unfortunately, with the passing of time all these find less and less attention. By now the interest seems to have shifted to paperbacks and movies which exploit the fate of these hapless victims. The more serious of them attempt to provide us with some psychological relief. Such efforts take essentially one of three forms. In the first, these most unfortunate victims are elevated into heroes. In another, their fate is reduced to the everyday level. In the last, what happened to them is made to appear insignificant by drawing attention away from them and concentrating it only on the survivors, who also are made into something they were not, and are not now.

There are other and much more obnoxious ways in which the camps are used in the media. Among them are novels and films which use the corpses of death camps to arouse and satisfy a morbid curiosity, or as a background for cheap comedy. There are also efforts to deny validity to the extermination camps by claiming that it never happened, or by directing our attention away from the victims to their murderers, who are made to appear in a favourable light as "interesting" characters.

The most serious and prevalent psychological device used today to distract us from the death camps is to view what happened to the victims as an event deserving of most severe criticism . . . but commonplace nevertheless. This device takes the form of equating Auschwitz with Hiroshima or with My Lai, or talking of "genocide" when referring to some government-sponsored sterilisation or birth-control programme. Equating My Lai with the death camps denies the crucial difference between isolated homicidal outbreaks in war—the consequence of anxiety, exasperation, or of a temporary breakdown of controls which, inexcusable though it may be and indeed criminal, nevertheless remains within the human dimension—and the careful planning and precise,

Forty Years On

AS A *Canadian Intelligence Officer I was in the early months of 1944 working in a branch of British Intelligence called MI 14b. My job was to help assess the strength and disposition of German forces in France prior to the Allied invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944. In the course of that work I had access to interrogation reports of German soldiers captured in Africa and elsewhere, as well as information gathered by our agents in Europe. One day I was horrified to read in an interrogation report the description of the mass shooting of Jews, provided by a soldier who had witnessed it. He graphically told of how men, women and children were lined up in front of huge graves and mowed down by machine-gunners. I discussed this account with my colleagues and we decided that it was a most unlikely story, was probably exaggerated or, at worst, an isolated incident.*

LATER, **in the final days of the war in Europe, although I was in a position to see most documents issued by Allied military authority about the Germans, I cannot recall a single instruction warning our troops of what they were likely to see when the concentration camps were overrun. The obscene sights at Auschwitz were something for which we were totally unprepared.**

NO DOUBT *at some higher level in the Allied command it was accepted that some atrocities had taken place. But since orders for the 'final solution' had never been committed to paper, and the project was undertaken in the greatest secrecy by men like Himmler and Heydrich, it should not come as too much of a surprise to post-war generations that the events portrayed in* **Holocaust** *(NBC & BBC) the seven-hour BBC marathon, were as incredible to us as they have been to most of those who sat through this unique television spectacular.*

"They think we're lying," says one of the Jewish characters in the Warsaw ghetto. "The crime is so huge no one will believe it."

The refusal of the human mind to take in the enormity of such a deed was confirmed to me by Rabbi David Gryn, who took part in a television discussion on **Holocaust**. *A survivor of Auschwitz and other concentration camps, he told me that even the potential victims of the gas chambers refused to believe they would die in such a manner. "I innocently was ushered into shower rooms and the only thing that came out of those showers was water. I was lucky."*

NO WONDER, THEN, **that so many people who watched** *Holocaust* **have had their first contact with the reality of those horrors. In spite of the films, novels, histories and documentaries that have in profusion dealt with the subject, only a fringe of the population were aware of what had actually happened. Perhaps typical of the remoteness of that period to some young people was the reply given to me when I asked a secretary of mine if she knew what anti-Semitism meant. I had been dictating a script about Oswald Mosley, the British blackshirt leader, and the expression had cropped up several times. "Of course I know what anti-Semitism means," she said. "It means 'the evil eye'."**

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deliberate execution of "the final solution." The essential differences are the premeditation which went into the one, compared with the breakdown of rationality and the taking-over of primitive emotions characteristic of the other; and the application of all the machinery and power of the state in one case, compared to the breakdown of controls in individual persons of which the state severely disapproves in the other.

EQUATING WHAT THE Nazis did with the American bombing of Hiroshima seems on the surface a more appropriate comparison, since in both instances governmental pre-planning was responsible for what happened. But it is actually an even more vicious distortion, because it accepts one of the biggest Nazi lies as truth: namely, that the Jews were an enemy waging aggressive war against Germany. In reality, as is well known, the Jews were Germany's most peaceful and most tragically obedient subjects. These comparisons, consciously or unconsciously, take the side of the Nazis against that of the Jews; and this subtle siding with the Nazis is one of the most pernicious aspects of the attitudes of all too many American intellectuals towards the extermination of European Jews. It is but the other side of the coin when the same intellectuals applaud books and films which use the death camps as background to titillate or excite, and in this way make them appear as but an ordinary part of life.

Quite opposite from that psychological defence are efforts to make the survivors appear as unusual and rather superior persons because of their experiences in the extermination camps. This was attempted most effectively in Terrence Des Pres's 1976 book *The Survivors*, which has found some acclaim in intellectual circles. The book draws our attention away from the millions who were murdered, and concentrates only on the all-too-few who survived, and survived only because the Allied armies rescued them at the last moment. It makes heroes out of these chance survivors. By stressing how the death camps produced such superior beings as the survivors, all our interest is forced on the survival of the few, at the expense of neglecting the millions who were slaughtered.

IF HOLOCAUST *has lifted only a fraction of this veil of ignorance, this would have been its prime justification. Compared with this sliver of enlightenment, it seems to me petty to find television critics complaining that the concentration camp inmates were too healthy-looking for authenticity or that the uniforms they wore were too neatly pressed. They forget that all popularisation of human catastrophes inevitably diminishes the events and characters involved.*

It is particularly unrealistic to complain that the atmosphere had been hygienised, that romantic interludes had obtruded, that facts had been twisted for dramatic impact. If the American producers and the BBC wanted a programme that would be watched by tens of millions, they had to speak to them in the fictional vocabulary such millions have become conditioned to seeing on the telly. If they were not to invite a massive switch-off, history had to be simplified to meet the demands of audiences who wanted to be entertained by the past as they had been in series like I. Claudius *and* The Six Wives of Henry VIII. *To insist that only a realistic documentary would be the dignified approach to such a subject would condemn the facts to minority audiences and perpetuate the vast ignorance about those events.*

HAVING SAID ALL THIS, **it would be optimistic in the extreme to expect that an awareness of man's capacity for brutality will in any significant ways diminish it. The Russians only a few years later stood idly by while Stalin meted out mass murder to their fellow citizens. After the horrors of the Vietnam war, torture and killings on a vast scale have taken place in Cambodia and South Vietnam. Man's capacity to justify his cruelty is apparently infinite.**

MY CHIEF RESERVATION *about the use of such a subject for popular entertainment on a mass medium like television concerns the danger of its desensitising impact on the viewers, particularly the young. The reiteration of horror—the gassings, the shootings, the torture over seven hours can, and probably did, have a brutalising effect on some who watched.*

Just as routine television violence has resulted in a percentage of young people accepting physical violence as a normal way of achieving personal and social ends, so mass slaughter becomes the stuff of routine human behaviour. Before the advent of television the mere sight of documentary films showing mounds of human bodies in the camps raised a storm of protest. We have now advanced morally to a situation where we can accept such infernal visions as a fictional nightcap. I wonder how many people reacted with less *concern and revulsion about the killing of white Rhodesians after a plane crash because their capacity to react had been stunted by their viewing of* **Holocaust**.

DOES THE CAPACITY **to brutalise offset the good done to society by information about these terrible times? I wish I knew the answer.**

Milton Shulman

in the BBC RADIO TIMES

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SURVIVORS FEEL exasperated and helpless when others, who have not the slightest idea what their experiences were like, hold forth about what these experiences were all about, and what their real meaning is. Elie Wiesel expresses well survivors' reactions to the psychological defences presently used to avoid facing the upsetting reality of what the extermination of the Jews was all about. Speaking of those who write about the survivors, Wiesel says:

> "Those who have not lived through the experience will never know; those who have will never tell; not really, not completely. The past belongs to the dead, and the survivor does not recognise himself in the images and ideas which presumably depict him. Auschwitz means death, total absolute death—of man and of all people, of language and imagination, of time and spirit. . . . The survivor knows. He and no one else. And so he is obsessed by guilt and helplessness. . . . At first the testimony of survivors inspired awe and humility. At first, the question was treated with a sort of sacred reverence. It was considered taboo, reserved exclusively for the initiated. . . .
>
> But popularisation and exploitation soon followed. And then, with the passing of time, it all began to deteriorate. As the subject became popularised, so it ceased to be sacrosanct, or rather was stripped of its mystery. People lost their awe. The Holocaust became a literary 'free for all', the no man's land of modern writing. Now everyone got into the act. Novelists made free use of it in their work, scholars used it to prove their theories. In so doing they cheapened the Holocaust; they drained it of its substance.
>
> To ward off survivors' criticism, the exclusive right to that title was taken away from them. Suddenly, everyone began calling himself a survivor. Having compared Harlem to the Warsaw ghetto and Viet Nam to Auschwitz, a further step has now been taken: some who had spent the War on a kibbutz or in a fancy apartment in Manhattan, now claim that they too have survived the Holocaust, probably by proxy. One consequence is that an international symposium [on the Holocaust] was held recently in New York without the participation of any Holocaust survivors. The survivors don't count; they never did. They are best forgotten. Don't you see? They are an embarrassment. If only they weren't there, it would be so much easier.
>
> The survivors will soon be unwelcome intruders. Their assassins are now in the limelight. They are shown in films, they are scrutinised, they are humanised. They are studied at first with objectivity, then with sympathy. One movie tells of the loves of a Jewish woman and a former SS. Gone are the days when the dead had their special place, and gone are the days when their lives commanded respect. People are more interested in their killers: so handsome and attractive, such pleasure to watch. This attitude exists among Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals alike.[3]

CONFRONTED WITH the death camps, our old categories do not hold. But just because the commonly used psychological concepts do not suffice to comprehend what has happened is not sufficient reason to deny the extermination of European Jewry validity, through use of devious psychological defences. Often I have felt the way Elie Wiesel feels: that only withdrawal into silence will do. I think Theodor Adorno felt this way when he wrote that there can be no poetry after Auschwitz. But if we remain silent, then we perform exactly as the Nazis wanted: for men to behave as if it never did happen. If we remain silent, we permit those who have falsified what happened to present the world with a fallacious understanding of one of the most tragic chapters of recent history. Thus, thoughtful men are closed off from valid insights into what attitudes we must develop to prevent it all from ever happening again.

There are few ways to commemorate the victims of the death camps in a dignified way. The *Yad v'shem* in Jerusalem is the prime example.[4] But it is unique because it is in Israel, and the state of Israel itself is the most appropriate, the best place to memorialise the victims.

I have found other places of commemoration which are also deeply moving. One is the Old-New Synagogue in Prague, the synagogue of the famous Rabbi Loew who (according to an ancient legend) created a man-like monster, the Golem. In this very place where Jewish life in Prague began in 1270, there is an epitaph to the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia whose slaughter ended the long history of Central European Jewry. The memorial consists of the 77,297 names of the known victims closely engraved on the walls of the Pinkas Synagogue (which, dating from the beginning of the 16th century, is part of the Old-New Synagogue complex).

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[3] Elie Wiesel, "For Some Measure of Humility", *Sh'ma, A Journal of Jewish Responsibility* (5/100, 3 October 1975).

[4] "*Yad v'shem*" is an expression from the Bible (*Isaiah*, 56:5). It is the promise of the Lord that He will give the righteous ones who have no children (i.e., who cannot be commemorated by them) a *memorial, an everlasting name.*

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To engrave these names for eternity is a fitting monument, because as these people entered the camps they lost their names, were treated not as persons, but as things to be sorted, processed and dispatched. The vast majority were murdered immediately; the rest were reduced to numbers tattooed on their arms, to serve as nameless, completely depersonalised slave labour; until they, too, were to be exterminated.

The memorials in Amsterdam and Paris also carry legitimate meaning, marking the places where Jews, being assembled for their shipment into the camps, were still freely feeling human beings, deeply related to their families and friends. These were the places where their human autonomy ended, and here it is memorialised, because their depersonalisation had only begun. Brought to this place, although the Jews were no longer free to act as they wished, they were still at least in command of themselves although no longer of their fate. On the transport to the death camps these people turned into shadows of their former selves, soon to be made into numbers in a hell which never recognised them as persons, but only as nameless bodies to be destroyed indiscriminately.

HOW CAN WE relate today to this appalling crime?

The German poet Paul Celan had been an inmate of the camps; his parents perished in the death camps. He did not try to evade this horrible experience. By confronting it within himself, he gave it poetic reality for us. Unfortunately Celan could not escape the after-effects of his fate; in 1970 he committed suicide. But he put the whole horrendous experience into one of his untitled poems: what we must try to understand about it and have compassion for, because only in this way can we comprehend what has happened and through our feeling response transcend it. Celan wrote:

There was earth in them, and
they dug.

They dug and dug, and thus
their day wore on, and their night. And they did
not praise God,
who, they heard, willed all this
who, they heard, knew all this.

They dug and heard no more:
they did not grow wise, nor contrive any song,
or any kind of language.
They dug.

There came a stillness, and there came a storm
and all the oceans came.
I dig, you dig, and the worm digs too,
and the singing there says: they dig.

Oh someone, oh none, oh no one, oh you:
Where did it go, if nowhere it went.
Oh you dig and I dig, and I dig myself towards
you,
and on our finger the ring awakes us.[5]

In his address of 1960 upon receiving the Büchner prize, Celan said, "He who walks on his head sees the sky beneath him like an abyss." That is the perspective of those who have earth in them as they dig—while they are still alive, they have already returned to the earth from which they came, as they dig their own graves. Their perspective is no longer a human one, with the sky above them; all they can perceive is the terror of the abyss.

The ultimate abyss with its unimaginable murderous terror—this is what we should name that which we have come to call the holocaust, if we wish to speak correctly of this unfathomable event. The abyss of the death camps is the destructive potentialities in man enacted.

WE CANNOT FULLY GRASP the nature and the implications of the death camps if we shy away from facing the destructive tendencies in man.

The aggressive part of our animal inheritance which in man has assumed its specifically human and peculiarly destructive form was called the

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[5] Translation from the original German by Joachim Neugroschel, in Paul Celan, *Speech Grille and Selected Poems* (1971).

The last two lines of the poem in Neugroschel's translation read:

Oh you dig and I dig, and to you I dig in,
and the ring awakes on our fingers.

I changed these two lines because I feel that my translation of them is truer to the original which reads:

O du gräbst und ich grab, und ich grab mich dir
zu,
und am Finger erwacht uns der Ring.

As I understand Celan, he did not mean to say that the other "digs in" as Neugroschel's translation suggests, since in German this would require the use of the verb *eingraben. Ich grab mich dir zu* has to be translated as "I dig myself towards you." And *am Finger erwacht uns der Ring* does not suggest that it is the ring which awakes, but rather that is the ring—symbol of the newly established bond between the one who digs, and the other who digs toward him—which awakens them both.

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death drive by Freud, and by Konrad Lorenz "the so-called evil."[6] Freud believed that in man the life and death (destructive) drives wage continuous battle, and that we can truly accept ourselves, and relate positively to the other, only when the life drives are in ascendancy—when they succeed in dominating our life as they manage to neutralise the death drive and its derivatives.

I think we cannot understand the Hitler phenomenon—and there were other monsters in history, although fortunately they very rarely reached similar dominance—unless we recognise by Hitler's actions and those of his henchmen that the death drive had completely overpowered the life drives. Hitler's belief that his cherished man of pure Aryan blood could flourish only when the lower races were completely exterminated created a death mania which, while it began with the Jews, did not end with them. Many others were also to be exterminated—the Gypsies; the mentally or physically deficient—while the Poles, Russians, Negroes, and members of other "inferior" races were to be radically reduced in numbers under Hitler's 1000-Year *Reich*.

[6] Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression* (1966). The English title fails to do justice to the original title Lorenz gave his book which is *Das sogenannte Böse*.

Had Hitler not been so obsessed by the conviction that other races had to die for the Germans to live, he might well have won the War, and with it much of the world. Not only German Jews, but vast numbers of Polish, Ukrainian, and even Russian soldiers would have joined the German army and might have brought it victory, had Hitler's wish to exterminate some and to enslave the others not prevented him from integrating them into his own forces.

So it happened as it must: those beholden to the death drive also destroy themselves. In the end, Hitler wished to and even tried to exterminate the Germans who had served him so well. His insistence that his army at Stalingrad had to let itself be killed, rather than try to save itself, is one example. Another is Hitler's carrying the war on long after it had been lost, trying to have every German fight until death rather than make peace.

THE BEHAVIOUR OF the Jews who, without offering resistance, permitted themselves to be walked to the gas chambers, cannot be comprehended either without reference to the death tendencies that exist in all of us. After the horrible transport into the death camps, confronted with the gas chambers and crematoria,

The Final Insult

IT CAN'T *be done and perhaps ought never to have been attempted, but if you leave those questions aside then there should be room to admit the possibility that "Holocaust" (BBC) wasn't really all that bad. At its best it gave a modicum of dramatic life to some notoriously intractable moral issues, and even at its worst was no disgrace.*

One's chief objection to the film "Judgement at Nuremberg" and the TV blockbuster "QB VII" was not that they were cynical, but that their sincerity was mentally deficient. Approaching their frightful topic with a plenitude of reverence but an insufficiency of penetration, they left it less comprehensible than it had been before. "Judgement at Nuremberg" somehow encouraged the belief that the Nazis were a lot of cruel men who ganged up on Judy Garland, while "QB VII" gave the impression that the whole nightmare of the Third Reich had taken place in order to help a Hollywood screen-writer solve his drinking problem.

THERE IS NO HOPE **that the boundless horror of Nazi Germany can be transmitted entire to the generations that will succeed us. There is a limit to what we can absorb of other people's experience. There is also a limit to how guilty we should feel about being unable to remember. Santayana was probably wrong when he said that those who forget the past are condemned to relive it. Those who remember are condemned to relive it too. Besides, freedoms are not guaranteed by historians and philosophers, but by a broad consent among the common people about what constitutes decent behaviour. Decency means nothing if it is not vulgarised. Nor can the truth be passed on without being simplified. The most we can hope for is that it shall not be travestied. "Holocaust" avoided that.**

Clive James
in THE OBSERVER

THE GERMAN CRIMES *against the Jews and other alleged sub-humans must not be made so unspeakable that we cannot search out meanings that go beyond our necessary revulsion. A troubled Rabbi on the BBC felt that he had to give qualified approval to "Holocaust" because at least "it had blown the lid off the subject." Millions of people in many countries have or will have seen some semblance of the worst and most fully documented crime in human history. The 20th-Century Book of the Dead.*

But a Book of the Dead written in the style of the Bestseller Yuk which now and intermittently fills

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the life drives in the Jews—deprived of everything that had given them security, robbed of all hope for themselves and, worst of all, deserted by the entire world—were no longer able to keep their death drive in bounds. But in their case, the death tendencies were not directed outside, against others, but turned inward, against the self.

That is why they should be memorialised at the places where they were collected for transportation—because there, although their life drives had been terribly weakened by their preceding experiences, they had not yet been extinguished. They were still wishing and trying to live, not yet entirely incapacitated by their own death drive. During the terrible transportation into the death camps, the horror of which was unimaginable, the power of their life drives must have slowly drained away. Having been on two of these transports,[7] I know that the horrors one was subjected to made one wish for death as a relief; that is, as the life drive recedes, the door is opened for the death drive to overpower the individual. That is why the victims could be herded to the gas chambers without resisting: the transport had turned many of them into walking corpses. In those who were selected for slave labour, slowly the life drives returned, weak though they remained, and they tried their very best to survive.

And here, finally, I come to the Western and the American contributions to the holocaust—sins of omission. The Euthanasia programme, as already mentioned, had to be stopped, dear as it was to Hitler, because too much opposition was aroused by it. Had there been as much concern abroad about the extermination of the Jews as there had been about the killing of the mentally defective and the insane, then the Nazis would probably also have had to stop their extermination of the Jews. But the world remained silent. The Pope, the world's clergy—all who had raised their voices for the mentally defective—remained silent when Jews were murdered.

This same lack of world concern, as it weakened life drives, reinforced the death tendencies in the Jews, because they felt completely abandoned, felt that nobody else cared, that nobody but they themselves thought they had a right to live. Unfortunately, one's own claim to life is not enough to keep the death tendencies within controllable boundaries. Most suicidal persons think they have a right to live; they try to commit

[7] First from Vienna to Dachau, the second time from Dachau to Buchenwald. Still, these transports cannot be compared to what went on years later on the transports to the death camps.

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spaces on the TV screens like soft plaster pressed into a badly cracked wall. The case against "Holocaust" is not that it is bad soap opera, but worse—much worse—that it is very good soap opera. It was well made, often well acted, skilfully mounted, beautifully shot, and the scores of naked extras quivering above the already open graves were sufficiently accomplished not to show their genitals to the cameras. Prime-time codes of behaviour, praise be, are still strong enough to over-ride Nazi edicts. It also meant—and pardon me if I splash you with my vomit—that not all the extras needed to be circumcised.

I have already heard some people talking warmly about the production. One of them said, and the others agreed, that it was "moving." Dear God in Heaven. Moving! You could say the same thing about a dog being run over in the road. And, yes, of course, it was "moving"—like "Gone With the Wind" is moving, or "The Bells of St Mary's." If you can't drum up a bit of pathos out of a pile of naked corpses you might as well bury your snout in a pot of crunchy peanut butter and write dialogue for Yogi Bear.

WE HAVE BECOME **so lobotomised by the effects of American prime-time "drama" that many people (especially TV executives) can no longer distinguish it from the real thing. The old story of bad coinage driving out the good. The BBC forked out a quarter of a million pounds for "Holocaust", and its new schedules are stuffed with similar imports. Last week, for instance, I watched "Starsky and Hutch", and then the new series about a feuding oil-family, "Dallas", and finally the lazy would-be slam-bang cops show, "Most Wanted." And what they all have in common—including "Holocaust"—is much more to the point than what separates them. I wish, though, that the ratings were not quite so aptly termed "the body-count."**

Entertainments like these are designed, first and foremost, to shift tons of toothpaste and acres of beans. They work fairly well because their conversions seldom bump into real feelings, genuine anxieties, private terrors, and social diseases. They glance, not collide. They pass the time. But to carry the same bag of techniques, the same clutch of assumptions, the same set of conventions across the frontiers into "Real Life" and absolute horror is not supportable. Unless they really did sell oven-fresh cookies in Auschwitz, and armpit deodorants at the very gates of Hell.

Dennis Potter
in THE SUNDAY TIMES

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suicide either because they are convinced that nobody else cares whether they live or die, or to find out whether this is so. They give up their suicidal ideas as soon as they come to feel that there is someone else who is deeply concerned that they live, and who is willing to go to great lengths to help them live.

The *SS* knew instinctively all there is to be known about the death drive; for good reason did the "Death-Head units" of the *SS* run the camps and wear a skull on their uniform. They tried systematically to destroy the strength of the life drives in prisoners.

Long before Jews permitted themselves to be transported into the death camps, long before they allowed themselves to be herded to the gas chambers, the Nazis had systematically destroyed their self-respect, robbed them of the belief that they could be masters of their fate. What happened to them impressed on them that nobody cared whether they lived or died, and that the rest of the world, including foreign countries, had no concern for their fate. One cannot meet catastrophic events and survive when deprived of the feeling that somebody cares.

The worst damage to our life drives does not come from the hateful and destructive actions of our enemies. While we may be unable to resist them physically, we can cope with them psychologically as long as our friends, those who we think ought to be our rescuers, live up to the trust we put into them.

Had the Jews felt that important voices in the rest of the world were raised on their behalf, that people in the free world cared and truly wanted them to live, they would not have needed to engage in the defence of massive denial, but could have realised what was going on, and reacted differently to it. They could then have coped better with the fact that the Nazis wanted them to perish and had planned for their destruction although nobody can cope really well with this. But many people have enemies who wish them evil; it was the indifference of all those others who should have come to their rescue which was so finally destructive to Jewish hopes.

The Nazis murdered the Jews of Europe. That nobody but the Jews cared—that the whole world, including the United States, did not care—was why Jewish life drives lost the battle against death tendencies.[8] This was why the camp inmates had already relinquished life as they dug their own graves, and why, as the poet put it, "there was earth in them." The most extreme agony is to feel that one has been utterly forsaken.

MURDERERS can only kill; they do not have the power to rob us of the wish to live nor of the ability to fight for life. Degradation, exhaustion, and utter debilitation through starvation, sickness, and mistreatment—all these seriously weaken our will to live, undermine our life drives, and with it open the way for the death drive. But when such conditions—in which the Jews found themselves because of Nazi persecution and degradation—are worsened by the feeling that the rest of the world has forsaken one, then we are totally deprived of the strength needed to fight off the murderer, to refuse to dig our own grave.

This level of despair is given words towards the end of Paul Celan's poem by the desperate cry "*Oh someone*", and then there is the final giving-up, when one realises that there is "*no one*." We ought to have been their someone, but we were their no one. This is our burden. Just because we cannot atone for it, it is wrong to deny or obfuscate it.

As if from beyond their grave—which was of course never allotted to these victims—the poet speaks to us with their voice: "*Oh you: where did it go, if nowhere it went.*" Only if we stop denying—for our comfort, and to our lasting detriment—what the holocaust was all about, will it stop going nowhere, will we know where it went.

OUR OBLIGATION—not to those who are dead—but to ourselves, and to those around us who are still alive, is to strengthen the life drives, so that never again—if we can help it—will these be so totally destroyed in so many, least of all by the power of a state. A true understanding of the Holocaust ought to imbue us with the determination that we shall never again permit that men, overcome by their desperation and enslaved by their death drive, will walk to their death as their murderers wish.

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[8] One of the last messages received by the outside world from the Warsaw ghetto said:

> "The world is silent; the world *knows* (it is inconceivable that it should not) and stays silent; God's vicar in the Vatican is silent; there is silence in London and Washington; the American Jews are silent. This silence is incomprehensible and horrifying."

Quoted by George Steiner in *Language and Silence* (1967). But it was not only silence which met the destruction of the Jews. German newsreels show what those in the ghetto must also have observed: the frequent laughter and applause of Polish spectators as they watched houses being blown up and Jews perishing in the flames.

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With the poet's help, finally, I can be more specific about what is needed:

Oh you dig and I dig, and I dig myself towards you,
and on our finger the ring awakes us.

If, with empathy and compassion, we dig towards those who have so completely given up all hope that "there is earth in them", this will bind us together (as the ring does in a betrothal) and we both will awaken: they from their living death; we from apathy to their suffering.

That we ought to care for the other—that with our concern we ought to counteract the death-like, and death-provoking, desperation that there is nobody who cares for one—has been taught since the beginning of time. But in each generation, one event more than any other makes this lesson especially pertinent, as it gives it a character specific to that age. For this century I believe this event is the extermination of the European Jews in the gas chambers, because the way it happened was possible only in a totalitarian, technological, mass society, obsessed by a pseudo-scientific delusion. (In the case of the Nazi state the particular pseudo-scientific delusion was its eugenic mission to improve the genetic inheritance of man.)

Nothing will give to us a more acute and pervasive understanding of the evils of such totalitarianism than when, in our mind, we dig towards the millions who have been so cruelly, so senselessly, so wantonly exterminated. It is the best we can do to forge a bond between them and us. While it will not awaken them, it may well awaken us to a more meaningful life.

A Statement

That it was known before setting out
to those mariners whose way was to the edge
of emptiness is known also to me:
I have had my companion
and that is finished. What is love
in its late phase when the world is hatched
with violence and only our feelings
for children are exemplary?
I have tried to let go
but instead I shut all beauty in a cage.
It is manifest, even among the workings
of experience, that I am not a denizen
of this paradise. The bird, scraping his beak
on the wire, could not live in my world.
I have been alone among friends
from the start. There is no metaphor
for loneliness, merely statement.
I see love walking in a garden
where the tempter is invisible
behind the canna flowers. Yet the bird
on the wire quotes literature at me—
I join the end
of things to their beginning.

Peter Porter

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Louis de Jong

Sobibor

UNLIKE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU, which served as both concentration- and extermination-camp, Sobibor was simply an extermination-camp, one of three *Vernichtungslager*—Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka—set up in the spring of 1942 by the *SS-Sonderkommando des Einsatzstabs Reinhard* (Special *SS*-Detachment of the Reinhard Operational Staff). All three camps were guarded in the main by Ukrainian and Lithuanian volunteers. In Sobibor, as far as it is possible to tell, the guards were Ukrainian, dressed in brown uniforms with *SS* flashes on their collars—some two hundred men altogether, commanded by "ethnic" Germans from the Ukraine. Sobibor also had a complement of 50 to 100 fully fledged *SS* men.

The land around Sobibor was thickly wooded. Before the War, there had been a saw-mill not far from the little station at Sobibor which lay on the railway-line leading from Lublin *via* Cholm to Brest-Litovsk; from this station a branch-line had been built specially for the transport of timber. It was this branch-line, about half a mile long, which decided *SS-Oberführer* (*SS*-Brigadier) Christian Wirth, *Inspektor* of the *SS-Sonderkommando*, to build a large extermination-camp on the site, the more so as the immediate vicinity had already been cleared of trees.

The building of the camp began in late February or early March 1942; the workers were Ukrainian volunteers or Jewish conscripts from the district of Lublin. They were ordered to build

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During the Occupation there were some 140,000 Jews in the Netherlands, of whom 128,000 were eligible for deportation (the 12,000 Jews married to gentiles were exempted). Of those eligible, 109,000 were actually deported, the great majority to Auschwitz. But from March to July 1943 more than 34,000 were sent to the far less well-known extermination camp of Sobibor deep in Eastern Poland. Of these 34,000, a mere 19 survived, including 17 who belonged to the small groups of deportees whom the SS *sent on from Sobibor to various* SS *labour camps. Nearly all the deportees in these camps were liquidated at the beginning of November 1943 in an operation which the* SS *gave the code name of* "Erntefest (*Harvest Festival*)."

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three small gas chambers with a total capacity of one hundred and fifty persons; and early in May, shortly after the arrival of the first *Lagerkommandant* (Camp Commandant)—*SS-Obersturmführer* (*SS*-Lieutenant) Franz Stangl—the first gassings took place of Jews from Lublin. Transport after transport now arrived. From each, a squad of some fifty men was selected to bury the dead and to sort the clothes the Jews had been ordered to remove shortly before being gassed. To start with, the entire squad was shot as soon as they had done their work, but later the group assumed a somewhat more permanent character, except for a contingent of twenty or so Jews who were made to clear the gas chambers and bury the dead. This contingent was shot every few weeks and made up again by a selection from among the "sorters."

From the middle of June to October 1942, the gas chambers in Sobibor stood idle while the camp was being enlarged. In particular, the platform at the end of the branch-line was extended to a length of about a quarter of a mile, and a narrow-gauge line, three-quarters of a mile long, was built from the platform to the centre of that section of the camp in which the gas chambers were located. New gas chambers were also built: a total of six, with a joint capacity of about 500 people. The extended camp, now under the command of *SS-Obersturmführer* Franz Reichleitner (Stangl had been transferred in August to Treblinka where he also served as *Lagerkommandant*), was used for the extermination of an unknown number of gypsies; of some of those Jews still left in the Lublin district (the rest were mainly gassed at Majdanek, officially known as *Konzentrationslager Lublin*); of Jews from Germany (*ca.* 10,000); from Bohemia and Moravia (*ca.* 6,000); from Slovakia (*ca.* 35,000); from France (*ca.* 2,000); from the Soviet Union (*ca.* 1,500); and from the Netherlands (more than 30,000).

In Sobibor—as in Belzec, Treblinka, Chelmno and (at first) in Majdanek—the poison gas used was not *Zyklon-B* but carbon monoxide. In all four camps the latter was obtained from the exhaust of a diesel engine connected to the gas chambers by tubes. In Sobibor the engine was that of a captured Russian tank. From October 1942, the corpses were no longer buried but burned in open-air incinerators; at the same time, Jewish prisoners were ordered to exhume the bodies buried earlier and to burn them too: they had produced a stench that even the *SS*-men and the Ukrainians had found unbearable.

HERE MENTION SHOULD BE made of some of the most important findings of a report written in the spring of 1945 by Kurt Gerstein (the man who tried—vainly—to alert the Papal Nuncio in Berlin, the Swedish Ambassador in that city, and the staff of the illegal Dutch paper *Trouw*).

On 8 June 1942, Gerstein (who had joined the *SS* in order to expose Nazi crimes and whom the *SS-Fuhrungshauptamt*—one of the *SS*-offices which organised and supervised the *Waffen-SS*—had put in overall charge of the decontamination of military clothing, barracks, etc.) was instructed by the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt* (Central Security Office of the German *Reich*) to accompany a car with 100 kg of *Zyklon-B* to somewhere in the East. The name of the place would be communicated to the driver in due course. It turned out to be Lublin, where *Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer* Odilo Globocnic told Gerstein in the strictest confidence on 17 August 1942 that Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka had been fitted with gas chambers for the extermination of Jews. According to Globocnic, the *Zyklon-B* was needed for the decontamination of the enormous quantity of clothing left in these camps. "However", Globocnic added, "your second and much more important task is the reconstruction of the gas chambers; they now run on diesel exhaust gases and something that works better and faster is needed." Accompanied by Wirth, Gerstein then inspected Belzec, Treblinka, and Majdanek.[1]

Gerstein arrived in Belzec on 18 August. Next morning at 7 a.m. a train carrying 6,700 Jews arrived from Lemberg. Nearly 1,500 had died on the journey. The survivors were driven out of the trucks by Ukrainians with whips. Many of the Jews must have guessed what was in store for them, since, according to Gerstein, "many were praying." He saw the four gas chambers being crammed to capacity,[2] the doors being slammed shut, and the diesel motor refusing to start. Gerstein pressed his stop-watch (for Globocnic had enjoined him to come up with "something that works faster"). Two hours and 49 minutes passed before the motor eventually caught. It was

[1] No visit was made to Sobibor at the time because of the construction of new gas chambers.

[2] Gerstein's words were: "with four times 750 Jews." This must, however, have been a slip of his memory, for it is almost certain that the total figure was 750.

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another 32 minutes before there was no more movement in the gas chambers.[3]

It has already been noted that the "something that works faster" (*Zyklon-B*) was not used in Belzec, Treblinka, Chelmno or Sobibor. Thus, as much as half-an-hour and always at the very least a quarter-of-an-hour elapsed between the shutting of the gas-chamber doors and the deaths of perhaps a quarter of a million people, including more than 30,000 deportees from the Netherlands.

On Friday, 5 March 1943, when the first transport arrived from the *Judendurchgangslager* (Jewish transit camp) of Westerbork in the Netherlands, the *Vernichtungslager* Sobibor had assumed its "definitive" form. It then covered an area of some 170 acres, surrounded by three barbed-wire fences, each nearly seven feet high and all three electrified (the camp had its own electric generator). Behind the inner fence, a ditch about ten feet wide and ten feet deep ran around the section of the camp with the living and sleeping quarters of the Jewish prisoners. Between the middle and outer fences lay a path that was constantly patrolled. In those parts of the camp where Jews worked and lived, the outer fence was bordered by a strip of land some thirty yards across which had been mined by a unit of the German Army. Around the camp stood twenty-seven watchtowers. There was one very high tower in the centre of the camp, which had been used by the foresters as a fire-watching tower.

The camp was divided into four sections, most of them separated from one another by three further barbed-wire fences. They were entered through special "gates", each with an armed guard. The arrival platform was situated in the so-called *Vorlager* (Front Camp), which also contained the *Kommandantur* (Camp H.Q.) and the quarters of the *SS*-men and the Ukrainians. This *Vorlager* (which had a large sign: *SS-Sonderlager Sobibor*—Special *SS*-Camp Sobibor) was the only section of the camp that could be seen by the deportees upon their arrival, the rest of the camp being hidden by wooden partitions or reed mats behind the barbed-wire fences camouflaged with branches. The fence facing the railway line was also camouflaged. Moreover, various buildings (some of them had formed part of the saw-mill) bore such signs as *Die Heimat Gottes* (God's Fatherland), *Das Schwalbennest* (Swallow's Nest), or *Zum lustigen Floh* (The Merry Flea). Newcomers could also see a building further away with a sign indicating that it served some medical purpose, and finally, at various crossings in the *Vorlager*—all set off with flowerbeds—there were clearly marked wooden signposts reading: To the Baths, To the Casino, To the Bowling Alley.[4]

The *Vorlager* led straight to *Lager 1*: the living quarters of the five hundred to one thousand Jewish men and women who (on pain of immediate execution) had to work, in the clothes in which they had arrived, either at sorting and packing the clothes of those who had been gassed, or else in the various *Kommandos* that served to maintain the camp—*Kommandos* of carpenters, shoemakers, dressmakers, fitters, electricians, smiths and bakers. In addition to a few workshops, *Lager 1* also contained a camp kitchen and a washhouse. Finally, there was the *Kommando* of woodcutters, the so-called *Waldkommando*, which, under heavy guard, worked outside the camp in order to produce the wood needed for the incineration of the corpses.

Lager 2 contained the huts in which everything the victims had brought with them was sorted and packed; some of the prisoners were able to smuggle a small part of the provisions into *Lager 1*. *SS*-men kept a constant watch over the collection of valuables; we may take it that they pocketed quite a few—after all, even the Jews working there were able now and then to secrete an article of gold or diamonds. *Lager 2* also had an animal-rearing area with cattle, horses, rabbits, chickens, ducks and geese. This part of the camp, which, like *Lager 1*, adjoined the

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[3] R. Höss, the *Lagerkommandant* of Auschwitz, who watched "the whole process" in Treblinka, declared after the War: "It took more than half an hour before everything was quiet in the chambers. I was told, however, that the engines did not always run smoothly, so that the exhaust gases were often not concentrated enough to kill everyone inside. Many were merely unconscious and had to be shot." See also R. Höss's *Commandant of Auschwitz* (London, 1959).

[4] These ideas had probably come from Franz Stangl; we know that he disguised the arrival platform at Treblinka Extermination-Camp as a normal railway station with such signs as *To Warsaw* and *To Bialystok*. There was also a large station clock that had no mechanism; the hands did not move, but Stangl was convinced that no one would notice.

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Vorlager, contained a kind of "square", partly roofed over. In the "square" (from which the storage huts could not be seen) were tables and benches where it was possible to sit and write; a wide path led to the "square" from the arrival platform. (The *SS*-men called the path the "*Himmelfahrtallee*—Ascension Boulevard.") Beside the path ran the narrow-gauge track, over which a small railway-engine could pull a series of trucks. It was presumably used from March 1943 for conveying those newcomers who were too weak to walk from the platform to the "square." Before they reached the "square", newcomers had to pass a barrack in which they were made to "deposit" everything they carried: winter clothing, blankets, provisions. On the "square" itself was the so-called *Kasse*, where all personal papers (in the case of the Dutch contingents this meant identity cards, various certificates, driving licences, and so on) had to be handed in—these documents were all duly burned in a deep pit in *Lager 2* as soon as a particular batch of prisoners had been gassed. Between the "square" and *Lager 3* were the barracks in which the prisoners had to strip; from them a short path lined with thick hedges led to the strictly isolated *Lager 3*, which bore the inscription *Lazarett* (Hospital) over the entrance gate.

Lager 3 contained the gas chambers, tended by a *Sonderkommando* of 150 to 300 prisoners. The gas chambers were fitted into a single fairly low building surrounded by flowerbeds, indicated as the "*Badehaus* (Bath House)" or the "*Badenstalt* (Public Baths)." A red Star of David decorated with green branches was fastened to the front of the building. The ceilings of the six gas chambers were equipped with dummy shower fittings. Behind the gas-chambers lay the gigantic incinerators in which four to five thousand corpses could be burned at one time—in Sobibor, bodies were only burned when no new transports were being expected. The *Sonderkommando* was quartered in *Lager 3*, and those allocated to it knew that they had just another four to six weeks of life left to them. The *SS* usually chose younger prisoners for this task (fairly brutish types, according to some witnesses). Quite a number, it would seem, lost their minds or committed suicide—not one has survived.

Lager 4 contained barracks for the reserve units of the Ukrainian militia. Finally, the construction of *Lager 5* (which adjoined the northern side of *Lager 4* and was referred to as *Lager Nord*) was only begun in the summer of 1943; at the time Heinrich Himmler ordered that it be set aside for the dismantling of various weapons captured from the Red Army.

POLISH TRANSPORTS arriving in Sobibor were treated quite differently from those originating in Central or Western Europe. The various deceptions I have described were apparently considered superfluous for Polish Jews, or were at least allied to crude violence from the very start. Polish Jews were often booted out of the wagons in which they arrived, and young children, the aged and the sick were tossed into the narrow-gauge trucks, taken straight to *Lager 3*, and shot down behind the gas chambers. The rest of the deportees were force-marched to *Lager 3* by *SS*-men with dogs and by Ukrainians, some on horseback, and, having been stripped, were herded, group by group, into the gas chambers, if necessary with whips and sticks. No wonder that some of the Polish transports put up a show of resistance, generally on the platform; Chaïm Engel, one of the few survivors of Sobibor, told us in 1965: "Sometimes there was shooting near the trains for hours at a time; we could certainly hear it. . . ."

In the case of transports from Central and Western Europe, the incoming trains were split up into sections. The size of each section, and indeed whether attempts were made to keep them all the same size, is not known but we assume that each section contained about five hundred people, as many as the gas chambers could hold at any one time. The section was then pulled up to the platform, where it was received by numerous armed *SS*-men and Ukrainians. As a rule, no shot was fired. Twenty Jewish prisoners from *Lager 1*, in blue overalls with the letters *BK*—*Bahnhof-Kommando* (Station Detachment)—were also in attendance. Their job was to help the newcomers off the trains and to assist in the transfer of the luggage.[5] The luggage had to be left in the

[5] On one occasion some members of this Jewish *Kommando* wrote (in German) on scraps of paper: "*This is a death camp. Fight for your lives!*" Deportees from Germany read the notes, but either slipped them into their pockets or else tore them up; an elderly gentleman was heard to call out that the whole thing was "a provocation." We can take it that the *SS*-men failed to notice anything, for no punitive measures were taken against any members of the *Bahnhof-Kommando*.

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luggage barracks; in exchange the arrivals were generally handed numbered metal tags. Either on the platform or in the "square", to which the newcomers would walk or be taken by the narrow-gauge railway, they would be treated to a short loudspeaker address in German by some *SS*-functionary or by *Lagerkommandant* Reichleitner himself (each transport from Westerbork included some people who knew German). The speaker would tell them that they were due to be transferred to a labour camp, the *Arbeitslager* Wlodawa—Wlodawa was the nearest large town—where the men would have to work but all the families would be kept together. Those who worked hard would be awarded certificates of good conduct. Meanwhile, they had all come a long way and would no doubt welcome a good wash in the bathhouse.

The deportees then deposited their personal papers and any valuables they still had in the *Kasse*. Some, making use of the tables and benches, were instructed to write letters on prepared forms stating that they had arrived at *Arbeitslager* Wlodawa (none of these letters ever arrived in Holland). Then they were led into the changing-rooms. The men and boys were separated from the women and girls, all were ordered to strip, and the women and girls had their hair shorn by thirty Jewish "barbers." This done, they were divided into groups and taken along the short hedged-in path to *Lager 3*, the "Hospital" and the gas chambers—women and girls first, men and boys to the rear. Once everyone was inside, the doors of the gas chambers were shut, and the diesel motors started. An *SS*-man on the flat roof would peep through a spyhole from time to time to see whether anything was still moving inside. When he was sure that everyone had suffocated, another set of doors—at the back of the gas chambers—was thrown open and the *Sonderkommando*, rounded up with whips, were ordered to fling the corpses out. Some members of the *Kommando* were also ordered to check the teeth of the victims for gold or platinum fillings or crowns; these teeth were ripped out with pliers. Then all corpses were loaded into the railway trucks and taken to the woodpiles where they were piled up in heaps.

In the meantime the engine had pulled the next section of the train up to the platform.

FROM FRIDAY 5 March to Friday 23 July 1943, except for two weeks in June, a transport from Westerbork (the Jewish transport-camp in the eastern part of Holland) pulled into Sobibor every Friday—save for one, all nineteen trains had left Westerbork on a Tuesday. Did things invariably pass in the orderly way I have just described? Most probably not, for in Sobibor at least twice as many Polish Jews were gassed as Jews from other countries; and their brutish treatment of Polish Jews no doubt accustomed the *SS*-men and the Ukrainians to a kind of routine that they must have found difficult to break. Moreover, when writing after the War about a transport from Westerbork (that of 1 June 1943: 3,006 deportees), one survivor had this to say:

> "We were driven out of the trucks with rubber truncheons and whips. I still remember how my father-in-law got an awful lash from a whip right across his back. Chel [his wife] and I looked at each other. If that's just the reception, we thought, the rest can't be all that good. . . ."

It should also be remembered that there were no survivors from 14 of the 19 trains that reached Sobibor from Westerbork—the rubber truncheons and whips were probably wielded quite often. When this happened, the deportees who, it is said, left their wagons with a sense of relief when no hostile reception awaited them, must have been panic-stricken from the start. We also know that one old man from Westerbork who turned politely to an *SS*-man and addressed him as *Herr Oberscharführer* (Quartermaster-Sergeant) was shot dead by the latter almost before he had said the words. Events like this must have caused deep alarm. Another transport, that of 17 March 1943 (964 deportees), did not arrive in Sobibor until midnight on Friday.

> "The first thing we heard [a survivor reports] was a lot of screaming Huns. We were made to run along a path [the *Himmelfahrtallee*] and then to stop in front of a reed partition [at the gate to *Lager 2*]. The women and children had to go on, and they disappeared through a gate. We could hear the sick people being thrown on to trucks, but otherwise all we could make out was the constant screaming and shouting."

A similar report has come from a survivor of the transport of 11 May 1943 (1,446 deportees): "The old and the sick were thrown on to trucks; they were continually beaten with whips."

In other words, three of the five transports about which we have eye-witness reports in-

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volved a smaller or greater amount of violence; on the other hand the declarations of survivors collected by Miriam Novitch—particularly from Jews taken into *Lager 1*—clearly indicate that Jews from other countries were given a much better reception at Sobibor than were Jews from Poland. Moreover, the reason for the policy of deception was not to arouse the suspicions of the victims upon their arrival, and each manifestation of violence was in conflict with this aim.

There is another point that should be stressed. We have assumed that the trains from Westerbork were divided into sections of about five hundred deportees each: i.e. as many as the gas chambers could hold. It must have taken at least between three-quarters of an hour and a full hour before the gas chambers were ready for a succeeding group. Sobibor transports from Westerbork varied from a minimum of 964 deportees to a maximum of 3,017; the average was well over 1,800. Most of the new arrivals therefore had to wait for a considerable time in their wagons until their part of the train was driven to the platform; perhaps the maximum was four to five hours. However, it could be they had to wait much longer, for before another five hundred victims were carried into the camp, all possessions of the previous group had to have disappeared and the gas chambers had to have reassumed a look of complete innocence.

WE KNOW A LITTLE (but not very much) about five of the transports because, as I have said, there were survivors. According to these, the *SS* would draw on *Lager 1* to provide the 150 to 300 men needed every four to six weeks to form a new *Sonderkommando*. In addition the *SS* would be ordered from time to time to select a number of deportees for transfer to various *SS-Arbeitslager* (Labour Camps) in the vicinity of Lublin. Of the deportees from Holland kept in *Lager 1*, there were but two survivors: Ursula Stern, born in Essen in 1926 (that is, a German refugee), and Saartje ("Selma") Wijnberg, born in Groningen in 1922. Of those transferred from Sobibor to other camps there were seventeen survivors: three men and fourteen women.

The five transports to Sobibor with known survivors included some 300 to 330 persons (the reports vary), mostly men, whom the *SS* decided to put to work. However, we know that many more workers were drawn from other transports; thus several hundred men from Westerbork (the figures vary from 250 to 400) ended up in an *SS-Arbeitslager* cutting turf. The Red Cross assumes that a total of no less than 800 Westerbork deportees were transferred to various labour camps from Sobibor.

Nearly all of these deportees were eventually murdered or perished. Only a very few went on from these vermin-infested camps—in which, moreover, they were at a grave disadvantage because they could not speak Yiddish—to the "official" concentration camps of Majdanek and Auschwitz: perhaps thirty of them, though that figure is a very rough estimate.

WE CANNOT tell precisely how many Dutch deportees were put to work in Sobibor itself. The first batch of Dutch inmates probably arrived as early as March 1943. Some were allocated to the *Waldkommando*; they had to work hard felling trees and digging up roots (intended for the open fires in the *SS* quarters) but the *SS* men and some of the Ukrainians guarding this squad of about thirty would also amuse themselves from time to time by forcing a Jew to climb to the top of a tree while other members of the *Kommando* were busy felling it.

For a short time the strength of the *Kommando* was extended to forty, including ten Dutchmen. Most of the rest were Polish Jews, and these decided to organise a break-out. Two of them, who had gone to fetch water (or bread), managed to kill their Ukrainian guard and to seize his gun. What happened next is not clear, except that the ten Dutchmen, who were totally unfamiliar with the area and could not speak a word of Polish or Ukrainian, did not take part in the escape (and perhaps were not even made privy to the plan). In any case, all those who managed to get away were recaptured and killed. In addition, ten other Jewish prisoners—possibly the ten Dutchmen—were shot dead as an extra reprisal for the killing of the one Ukrainian.[6]

In June 1943 the Dutchmen then in the camp—seventy-three in all—devised a plan for a mass escape. The leader of this group was probably Jozeph Jacobs, a petty officer in the Dutch Royal Navy, born in Amsterdam on 11 July 1902. From 1940, Jacobs had been active in the Dutch

[6] On a later occasion, when two prisoners made a successful attempt to break away from the *Waldkommando*, all the prisoners in the camp were lined up and every tenth man was shot.

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underground movement. He was arrested on 20 April 1943 in Arnhem, carrying false papers, was taken to Westerbork on 4 May and transported on 18 May to Sobibor, where he arrived on the 21st. According to some witnesses, he made contact with a Ukrainian who promised to help him and the other Dutch deportees, but betrayed them to the Germans. Jacobs apparently took all the blame, but to no avail: seventy-two Dutchmen lost their lives (according to some they were shot, according to others they were beheaded), the only Dutch prisoner to be spared being a painter who had to produce a steady stream of portraits of the *SS* and Ukrainian guards.

It seems to have been Jacobs' example (if it was indeed Jacobs who led the group) which encouraged a handful of other prisoners, very few in number, to think, or perhaps to think again, of some form of resistance. One problem was that the number of Jews quartered in *Lager 1*, many of whom worked in *Lager 2* (there was no link at all with *Lager 3*, which contained the gas chambers), was anything but constant. The maximum was 1,000, but from 150 to 300 disappeared regularly into the *Sonderkommando*. Prisoners would fall ill and be sent to the gas chambers; others fell victim to the various "games" thought up by the *SS* and the Ukrainians (for example, their trouser legs would be tied up and rats let loose inside, anyone making the slightest move being shot).

What chance was there for anyone to come out of this hell alive? None at all. Was it not far better to organise an uprising during which many would admittedly lose their lives, but some might well reach the nearby woods in which groups of partisans were known to be hidden? Unfortunately, only a very few prisoners had learned to handle a gun; and it was clear to all that nothing could be achieved without guns or ammunition. Each of the watchtowers surrounding the camp and the tall watchtower in the centre were occupied in day-time by armed Ukrainians who could alert all the other armed guards by firing a shot. At night *Lager 1*, in which all the Jews (except for the *Sonderkommando* isolated in *Lager 3*) slept, was completely sealed off.

ALL THE WITNESSES AGREE that the credit for devising a plan of campaign that was not doomed from the outset must go to two Jews: Leibl Felhendler (the son of a rabbi and ex-chairman of the Jewish Council in a small ghetto near Lublin) and Alexander Petcherski (a Red Army officer). We do not know when Felhendler reached Sobibor, but we do know that Petcherski arrived on 21 September 1943. He had been captured by the Germans in October 1941 and had successfully concealed his Jewish origins. However, in the summer of 1942 he had tried to escape, and when he was recaptured the truth was discovered during a medical examination, whereupon he was taken to a Jewish labour camp in Minsk. Six hundred Jews from that camp were sent to Sobibor on 21 September 1943; five hundred of them were gassed, and eighty (including Petcherski) assigned to *Lager 1*. Petcherski knew no Yiddish, but a fellow prisoner from Minsk, originally from the Warsaw ghetto, acted as his interpreter. The group from Minsk, according to Chaïm Engel, "filled the camp with quite a different spirit": more active, more militant.

Felhendler and Petcherski based their plan on the fact that the prisoners in *Lager 2* (where the clothing of the murdered Jews was inspected, sorted and packed) were lined up each day at 4.30 p.m. and marched into *Lager 1*, escorted by a few *SS*-men, past a gate guarded by a single Ukrainian. It was decided that, at exactly 4.00 p.m. on the appointed day, the four *SS*-men usually on duty in *Lager 2* would be lured into one of the huts, overpowered and killed. At precisely the same time, the *SS*-men on duty in *Lager 1* (which contained the prisoners' dormitory huts and the barracks of the *Kommandos* tending the camp) would also be lured into some of the barracks and killed. The rebels would seize their pistols; female prisoners working as servants in the *SS* and Ukrainian quarters would have previously stolen the requisite ammunition. The prisoners in *Lager 2* would also strip the uniforms from the four dead *SS*-men. Four prisoners would don them and, at 4.30 p.m. precisely, the prisoners would line up as usual and proceed to *Lager 1*. The conspirators felt that even if the Ukrainian guard at the gate should notice that something was wrong, he could easily be eliminated before he raised the alarm. The prisoners from *Lager 2*, together with those from *Lager 1*, would then try to pass the gate between *Lager 1* and the *Vorlager*, and make straight for the ammunition depot in the latter.

Before the column in *Lager 2* set out, a prisoner tending the small generator which supplied the entire camp with current (including the electrified

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barbed-wire fences) would put the generator out of action. He would be warned by a messenger as soon as the first *SS*-men in *Lager 2* had been struck down.[7] Other prisoners would cut the telephone wires connecting *Lager 1* and *Lager 2* with the *Kommandantur*.

IT WAS ASSUMED that there would be some shooting in the *Vorlager*; it seemed extremely unlikely that all the prisoners would be able to cross it and make for open country. It was therefore decided to procure pliers for cutting the fences in one or more places and to lay long planks across the ditches wherever necessary. The land-mines could not be rendered harmless—indeed the prisoners would have to run across the minefields throwing large stones in front of them as they went and hoping for the best; Felhendler and Petcherski had learned from prisoners who had watched the *Wehrmacht* at work that the mines had been laid some fifteen feet apart. Finally, some inmates would break into the *SS*-garage and destroy the squad cars kept inside to prevent their use in pursuit.

This plan, which was bold in the extreme (even if eight to ten armed *SS*-men were eliminated, some dozens more would be left in the camp, not to mention the Ukrainians), had one inevitable flaw and one weak point. The flaw was that nothing at all could be done for the Jews in the *Sonderkommando* (who were totally isolated in *Lager 3*); the weak point was that it was impossible to eliminate the armed Ukrainians on the watchtowers, a single shot from whom would alert all the other Ukrainians and *SS*-men in the camp. Felhendler and Petcherski relied on the hope that quite some time would pass before the Ukrainians on the watchtowers would notice anything amiss.

There was yet another problem. How would the prisoners stay alive once they had managed to escape from the camp? They would have to be on the march for days, if not for weeks, before reaching the partisans in the surrounding woods, and would therefore need help from nearby peasants. Some prisoners known to be exceptionally clever at secreting valuables from the piles of clothing of the dead were accordingly asked to build up a reserve of gold and diamonds.

[7] In Auschwitz-Birkenau small light-bulbs were attached to the barbed-wire fences to show that the wires were under high tension. In Sobibor there were no such safeguards.

At the time the plan was devised and the necessary preparations made, there were some six hundred Jews in *Lager 1*, including about eighty women and girls. Only a few dozen were let into the plan. Felhendler and Petcherski were convinced that the rest would tackle whatever tasks came their way with the courage of despair.

UNEXPECTEDLY AS ALWAYS, on 12 October the Germans held a selection in *Lager 1*. Eighteen prisoners, including several who had come with Petcherski from Minsk, were found to be sick and carted off to the gas chambers.

> "Among those eighteen [Petcherski stated some years ago] was a young Dutch prisoner who could hardly stand up. When his wife, who was also a prisoner in the camp, heard that her husband was being taken away, she ran after the guards shouting: 'Murderers! I know where you are taking him, I don't want to live without him! Murderers! Butchers!' She died with the rest of the group."

One day later Felhendler and Petcherski learned that Reichleitner and his notorious ADC would be away on 14 October. They immediately decided to profit from their absence.

Those who knew what was about to happen could barely stand the tension. "It was the longest day of my life", one of them declared later.

At the agreed time the four *SS*-men in *Lager 2* were lured into one of the huts with the story that valuables of exceptional worth had been discovered inside. They were killed within a few seconds. The same thing happened to an unknown number of *SS*-men in *Lager 1*. A message was sent to the prisoner looking after the generator: he immediately put it out of action. At the same time, the telephone lines between *Lager 1*, *Lager 2* and the *Kommandantur* were cut. Precisely at 4.30 p.m. the usual column of prisoners set out from *Lager 2* for *Lager 1*. Before the Ukrainian guarding the gate could raise the alarm, he had been felled with an axe. The column now rushed into the *Vorlager*, joined by scores of prisoners from *Lager 1*.

At this point a shot was fired from one of the watchtowers.

In the ensuing confusion things began to go badly wrong. The prisoners were unable to reach the ammunition depot. Though they did manage to break into the garage, they found that the squad cars had been taken out by some of the

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SS who had left the camp in them. There were enough Ukrainians and *SS*-men remaining in the camp, however, to prevent a mass escape via the *Vorlager*, and only a small group led by Petcherski was able to fight its way out. While shooting was going on all about them, several other prisoners cut the wires in one or more places in *Lager I*, threw long planks across the ditch, and braved the minefield. Many of the mines exploded, and several of the fugitives were blown to pieces. Other prisoners were hit by bullets, some in the open field between the camp and the woods. Yet others who saw no chance of getting away hid in various parts of the camp.

A MAN-HUNT WAS STARTED immediately by all the surviving *SS*-men and Ukrainians (twelve *SS*-men and six Ukrainians had been killed), reinforced by hastily summoned units of the Polish police and gendarmerie. Numbers of prisoners were discovered and shot on the spot; those who had hidden in the camp, including some women, were either shot or burned alive. The *Sonderkommando*, too, was shot to a man.

Some three hundred prisoners had been able to reach the woods. Many of them were murdered or betrayed by Polish and Ukrainian anti-Semites. Felhendler was murdered in liberated Poland in April 1945; Petcherski survived. Others managed to join partisan units. Of the three hundred or so who had made good their escape, not many more than thirty-five were able to celebrate the day of liberation, amongst them Selma Wijnberg and Ursula Stern.

Selma Wijnberg and Chaïm Engel (who had been able to take some gold with him out of the camp) stayed hidden for nine arduous months in a farmyard stable. Ursula Stern had escaped with Kitty Gokkes, a Jewish girl from The Hague, and with a Polish-Jewish woman whose husband was fighting in a Jewish partisan group led by Michal, a 24-year-old Jew from Sosnowitz. With great difficulty all three eventually managed to meet up with this group. During the next few months, while engaged in blowing up German trains, they had to defend themselves not only from the Germans but also from Polish partisans who tried to take their arms. Many were killed. Kitty Gokkes contracted typhus and died.

> "At long last came the Liberation [Ursula Stern said a few years ago in Israel, where she now lives]. Our group made for Wlodawa. There I met Selma Wijnberg and her fiancé, Chaïm Engel. The first thing we did was to go back to the place where we had suffered so terribly. Not a trace of the camp was left."

The former saw-mill buildings were the only ones left standing; apart from this the entire terrain on which *Vernichtungslager* Sobibor once stood had been planted over with saplings. It was as if the Final Solution had never taken place.

The Survivor

I, the sophisticated primate,
Have stunted fingers on my feet;
And almost I control my climate;
And Everything is what I eat.

I wrote the story of creation
When I discovered nudity:
The world is yours for exploitation.
I gave this charter unto me.

I traded in for my survival
My peaceful heart, my flealined coat;
Outpaced my vegetarian rival.
I have Creation by the throat.

Gerda Mayer

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Richard Lowenthal

Why German Stability Is So Insecure

On the Self-Awareness of the Bonn Republic

SOME THIRTY YEARS after the efforts of the founding fathers bore fruit in the "Basic Law", the Federal Republic of Germany is, by any standards, the most stable among the major states of Western Europe. Only—its own citizens will simply not take this for granted.

For one accustomed to interrupt his life in Germany by longish residences abroad, this is the recurrent paradoxical impression on every return: objective stability is not matched by a subjective sense of security. The self-awareness of the Federal Germans lacks self-evidence. The phenomenon described by the pollsters as the "Anxiety Gap"—that, of the large majority that in its own judgment is well off, a considerable part expects change for the worse—strikes many non-German observers simply as *the* German ideology of the day, or if you prefer, as the basic problem of the collective psychology of our German contemporaries.

"Objective" Success

BEFORE I ATTEMPT an explanation, let us make sure of our facts. The economic success of the Federal Republic has long outlived the "economic miracle" of the first years of reconstruction, and is still remarkable in conditions of world-wide recession. It is the only major Western industrial country that has sufficiently overcome the setback of the "oil crisis" to achieve a steadily active balance of payments. Both the persistent firmness of the D-Mark and the reduction of the inflation rate below the "normal" post-War level of 3%, outdone only by Switzerland, are expressions of that achievement. True, the pace of economic growth is still slow by international standards; and unemployment, hovering persistently around the one million figure, reflects both the slowness of domestic investment and the high proportion of "labour-saving" rationalisation measures. But those difficulties have their roots partly in the excessive fear of inflation, which itself constitutes part of our problem, and partly in world-wide shifts in the international division of labour. Even in those conditions, West Germany still has the lowest *rate* of unemployment among the major industrial countries of the West.

Social and political life has not been notably less stable than the economy—prophets of doom notwithstanding. Some serious industrial conflicts have occurred in the last few years, but they constitute isolated exceptions in an overall picture of remarkable social peace—in contrast both to the leading European partners of the Federal Republic and to the USA.

The democratic party system has so far proved its solidity in all elections. Participation stubbornly persists above 80% in all Federal elections and hardly falls below 75% in *Land* elections; and this reservoir of votes is still overwhelmingly appropriated by the same parties that have been represented in the Bonn parliament for decades. The parties of the extreme Right or Left have fallen back far below their temporary successes during the recession of 1966-67—so far not one of them has managed to push its way into a single state parliament, in contrast to the rise of the *NPD* at that time. True, symptoms of a growing "fed-upness" with the established parties deserve attention, and the possibility of a future success of "Ecologist" or "Anti-Tax" parties cannot be excluded *a priori*, following the spring elections in Hamburg and Lower Saxony. But a few polls are hardly a serious reason for predicting a major change in the political landscape; nor is the national echo of the militant wing of the ecologists (in which Communist splinter groups have become active) as yet comparable to that of the "Extra-Parliamentary opposition" of the late 1960s.

What is really disquieting is, of course, the activity of the terrorists, but this is from all the evidence confined to a few dozen desperate addicts of violence, plus a somewhat larger (but apparently shrinking) circle of active supporters. It is, thus, evidence not of a growing crisis of "the System", but of the—certainly serious

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—persistence of a marginal hostility to the political order. It emerges from that ghetto of the extreme Left which was left over from the youth revolt of the last decade—after the waning tide of the "revolutionary" wave and the integration of the bulk of its one-time supporters as a radical wing in the *democratic* Left. It is an isolated "hard core." Given the attitude of the mass of the population and the firmness of the political authorities, no sober observer can regard terrorism in Western Germany as a danger to the survival of its democracy.

FINALLY, the international position of the Federal Republic is stronger and more assured than ever. It has a secure place and considerable influence in the Atlantic alliance, and its voice in the European Community is listened to in accordance with its weight. At the same time it is—in defiance of its geographic situation—since the Moscow, Warsaw, and Berlin treaties, in a far less exposed position vis-à-vis the Soviet bloc than before. Although the long-term conflict between the superpowers and the contrasting systems continues, and although the Federal Republic is as much committed to the Western side as ever, the liquidation of its special territorial conflicts with the Soviet bloc has had the expected consequence that the heart of Europe is no longer one of the main danger zones in world affairs. Parallel with this change, the Federal Republic has acquired an increased freedom of movement in other parts of the world; and it has made cautious use of those new chances without succumbing to the temptation of over-engagement.

"Subjective" Insecurity

IN CONTRAST TO the remarkable economic, social, political, national—and international stability of Western Germany—there is among its citizens a striking lack of serenity. They *live* more securely than at any time since 1914, but they do not *feel* secure.

Probably the best-known example of this is the over-sensitivity of the German public to the danger of inflation. To be sure, public discussion of this subject has lost much of its former explosive force since the real problem passed its peak four or five years ago. But in the debates on the size of the public debt and on expenditure for stimulating the economy by public works, fear of inflation plays a prominent part. No less typical is the tendency to dramatise social conflicts in a country which, ever since the end of World War II, has suffered from them *less* than any other major Western state. The fact that wage disputes, usually settled by arbitration, are now and then fought out by strikes—which elsewhere would be considered normal—is here immediately proclaimed a danger to "social peace."

The same problem has in recent years taken a more general form; let me call this the "pseudo-polarisation" of German domestic politics. Some years ago I disputed Professor Helmut Schelsky's view that phases of political polarisation in a democracy must necessarily indicate its malfunctioning. I argued that polarisation in periods of great basic decision-making, forms part of the nature of the democratic process as much as does a softening of party conflicts in the intervening periods.[1] Thus I took the sharpening of the conflicts between Government and Opposition that took place in the Federal Republic between 1969 and 1973 (when the decisions on *"Ostpolitik"* and the basic reforms of the Socialist-Liberal coalition were taken) to be as normal as the similar polarisation in the early years of the Bonn Republic (in which Dr Konrad Adenauer laid the foundations for its ties with the West) and as the rapprochement between the parties since the beginning of the 1960s (which culminated in the Grand Coalition). What is *not* normal is the feverish continuation of "polarised" politics in the years since 1973, when the big decisions had already been taken and the recession left little scope for the pursuit of alternative programmes by the parties. It is a polarisation without substance, often tending to magnify marginal differences as if the very existence of the democratic order was at stake. It embitters relations between the parties by hectic emotionalism and personal abuse.

What is really endangered by such antics is the necessary awareness of the common values which link democrats of every hue beyond any partial conflicts, the civilised style of political discourse, and last not least the reputation of the parties, and hence of the democratic process, in sectors of the electorate.

A SIMILAR DANGER is inherent in the tendency to dramatise routine questions of legislation to the level of constitutional conflicts, thus implicitly charging political opponents again and again with contempt of constitutional principles.

The institution of a Constitutional Court with far-reaching powers of judicial review, introduced in Germany under the influence of the American model, may indeed help to stabilise the democratic order, since it imposes limits on the arbitrary decisions of transient majorities. But it may

[1] See, in ENCOUNTER, Helmut Schelsky, "A German Dilemma" (February 1974), and Richard Lowenthal, "The Conservative Utopia" (June 1974).

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also lead to a gulf between the rigid interpretation of legal texts and a changing social reality, once the American—and Common Law—tradition of interpreting the legal norms with due regard to the long-term change in public values is replaced by the Continental (and particularly German) idea of the unchangeable meaning of the written rule. It was natural enough that the German opposition of the time—against Dr Adenauer as against Willy Brandt—called on the Constitutional Court when decisions of principle were to be embodied in international treaties that were binding for a long time to come. But the attempt to turn the Court into an organ of quasi-everyday revision of legislative decisions, and the recent readiness of the Court to accept this role (and indeed to "discover" in the constitutional text a basis for detailed legislative precepts in a variety of fields), is bound to lead to a distortion of the division of powers. It is rooted in the assumption that fundamental rights of the citizens are constantly endangered by their elected representatives, and that judges who had been selected indirectly by inter-party compromise represents a "superior" kind of objectivity compared with representatives of the people elected on the basis of an openly proclaimed political programme.

This is bound, first, to discredit the democratic process whose results are subordinated to a "non-partisan" interpretation of law; then to blur the delicate but vital borderline between the necessary *review* of democratic decisions under the rule of law and their gradual *replacement* by the transgressions of a "rule of the judiciary"; and, finally, to discredit the judges themselves, increasingly tempted into political pronouncements that are beyond their competence.

BUT THE MOST DRAMATIC expression of German insecurity is the reaction of large parts of German public opinion to the phenomena of left-wing extremism in general and of terrorism in particular, and the reaction of a broader, vaguely "radical" Left to the counter-measures of the government.

In fighting terrorism, the main *political* task—as distinct from the strictly police tasks—is to isolate the perpetrators of violence from the bulk of the citizens who approve the existing political and social system and from the vast majority of its "left-wing" critics who reject terrorism as a means of "changing the system." However, many "right-wing" leaders of opinion and many insecure and frightened citizens, have shown an inclination to label all radical critics on the Left as "sympathisers" with terrorism, and to charge even the moderate Left with unduly playing down the danger. These circles regard as especially reprehensible any writers or journalists who, while condemning terrorism, try to arrive at an understanding of the ideological motivations of those outcasts and of the social causes of the phenomenon. In the minds of those who look for "ideological accomplices" everywhere, the real danger thus appears vastly multiplied.

A DIFFERENT, but related, problem is posed by the dispute over employing opponents of the Constitution in public service.

I considered at the time (and still consider today) that Chancellor Brandt and the Minister-Presidents of the West German states had good reason, when issuing their famous circular five years ago, for wishing to prevent the massive employment of the Communist teachers and would-be judges then coming from the universities. Moreover, the civil service law (*Beamten-Gesetz*)—which existed from the beginnings of the Federal Republic, and contained the ruling that civil servants must actively support the basic principles of a liberal democracy—gave them an indisputable legal basis for such prevention. They needed to pass no new law or decree, but merely to call the attention of their subordinates to the letter of the existing law. In practice, however, the unfortunate comprehensiveness of the German civil service concept—under which all postmen or locomotive engineers rank as civil servants and enjoy corresponding advantages—has led to the application of this criterion of constitutional loyalty to a number of occupations which imply no political responsibility and no potential security risk. Even in fields where "vetting" must in principle be regarded as appropriate, from the nature of the job, the administration and the courts have in a number of cases proved incapable of making the crucial distinction between committed opponents of the democratic constitutional order and mere critics of specific features of the social system (or even of particular political decisions), who may have manifested such criticism by participating in student demonstrations. The very slogan: Weed out the "Radicals"—a term not contained in the text of the civil service law or the ministerial circular, but used as widely by its supporters as *Berufsverbote* by its opponents—favours the mental climate of intolerance rooted in insecurity. It tends to confound the use of the democratic right of criticism, including radical criticism, with subversion of the democratic state. Such a practice has, therefore, not served the protection of a liberal, democratic order,

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but has led to the violation of the civil liberties of many individuals, and become an obstacle to the democratic integration of important elements of the young generation.

On the other hand, many spokesmen of the more or less radical Left have interpreted the "hunt for terrorist sympathisers" in the conservative press, and the injustices committed in decisions concerning admission to civil service positions, not as an objectionable tendency on the part of public opinion or as a misconceived administrative practice, but as the expression of a reactionary and repressive (even quasi-fascist) transformation of the entire political system of the Federal Republic. They, too, have underestimated the stability of a liberal order that made possible both their protest and its echo in the policy of the Federal Government. They have at times exaggerated the dangers to an absurd degree. They, too, like the frightened rightists, developed the bogeyman of "Another Republic." The lack of a secure democratic self-confidence frequently expresses itself in self-pity.

SO FAR, I HAVE tried to describe the contrast between the objective stability of the Federal Republic and the subjective insecurity of its citizens in a variety of forms. Let me now turn to its causes.

Background of Disasters

THE MOST OBVIOUS CAUSE is to be found in the series of profound shocks that Germany's society and state experienced during the first half of this century. Two World Wars were lost in spite of unexampled effort and heavy sacrifice. The second ended with total occupation of the country, temporary loss of sovereignty, and the partition of the nation. Three times in the course of three decades, Germany's political order has suffered collapse—in 1918, 1933, and 1945. (In comparison, Italy suffered only two such breakdowns, at the seizure of power by Fascism, and at its overthrow; France experienced only one, in 1940, for the transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Republic was no collapse.)

On two occasions, many millions of Germans lost their entire savings—in the great Inflation culminating in 1923, and with the end of the *Reichsmark* after Hitler's war. The world economic crisis hit a German economy which had heavy foreign debts and weak reserves. At its climax, one third of the German labour force was unemployed—more than six million. The destructions of the Second World War and the expulsion of millions of Germans from their homes at its conclusion not only added to the traumatic experiences of this people, but deprived the nation of a large part of its real capital.

Against this background it can hardly be cause for astonishment that the recovery of legal order and security, of an affluence surpassing all earlier achievements, and of international recognition and respect has been received with the mental reservation of Napoleon's mother: *Pourvu que ça dure!* This anxiety concerning the permanence of the post-War gains is a problem, naturally, for the generation responsible for the rebuilding effort that made them possible. But even the later-born generation, however scanty its general knowledge of history, still feels that experience of their elders in its bones. Hence any temporary rise in the inflation rate recalls all too easily the image of the currency annihilations of earlier times; any "Recession" that of the Great Slump of 1929–32; any discussion on nuclear arms that of Hitler's War. And the existence of a Communist dictatorship next door, in the other part of Germany, does not permit even the permanence of the democratic order in the West to be regarded as self evident.

Democracy without Tradition

A DEEPER REASON for the limited confidence with which the Germans appear to view the stability of their democratic institutions is the absence of an old—let alone continuous—tradition of democratic processes. The only earlier attempt at a fully democratic constitution, the Weimar Republic, had from its birth to bear the double burden of the hostility of the old upper classes (including a large part of the public servants in the administration, the judiciary, and the army) and of a substantial part of the working class, i.e. the followers of the Communist mass party of that period. It soon ended in failure.

The only positive democratic tradition is that of the post-war formative years of the Federal Republic, based on two fundamental lessons from the past: (1) the awareness of the common cause of all democrats, from the Conservatives to the Socialists; and (2) the need for a militant democracy, ready to fight actively against all enemies of a liberal order.

But there is another political tradition still alive in the political subconscious of the Germans —far more powerful than either the negative example of Weimar or (rejected for different reasons) of the Third Reich. I refer to the tradition of the *Obrigkeitsstaat,* an authori-

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tarianism limited by the rule of law. It goes back far beyond the Wilhelminian empire, and it lived on in the classes who regarded themselves as "pillars of the state" in opposition to the Weimar Republic. This tradition perceives the "State" as the expression of an "objective common interest", once embodied in the Monarch and later represented by the Bureaucracy, in contradistinction to the party "squabbles" of a democracy allegedly dominated by purely party interests. The modern idea that the parties of a democracy should stand for alternative concepts of the common interest and seek to win the electorate for their implementation is alien to that mentality. It thus tends to deprive the concept of "the State" of its democratic content and to turn it into a fetish. It is a tendency still echoed today when those who appeal for defence of public order forget that it is the preservation of a liberal-democratic order that is at stake, and that the nature of this goal must govern the choice of means appropriate for its defence. On the other hand, the traditional identification of the authoritarian state with the privileged classes as its pillars has produced a counter-tradition of hostile distrust of the State among the underprivileged classes. It was transferred by the Communists and their sympathisers to the Weimar Republic, and today still determines the attitude of the "Radical Left" intelligentsia toward the Bonn Republic.

THE CONVERSION of the conservative section of the people to democracy after 1945, which formed the basis of the early Christian Democratic ascendancy, and the completion of the development of the workers' movement to full support of the democratic state and its internal and external defence, which found expression in its unity within the Social Democratic party—together they constitute the foundations of the incomparably greater stability of the second German Republic.

Together with the new consciousness of the common cause of all democrats, there grew in the founding years another basis for a democratic community: toleration—a natural respect between political opponents, based on awareness of common values. Yet the emphasis on the need for a militant democracy has allowed many citizens of the Federal Republic to overlook the democratic principle that a liberal state must also show itself tolerant toward radical critics of its political or social order, so long as the critics keep within the legal "rules of the game." The danger became more acute when in the late 1960s the wave of left-wing radicalism itself assumed highly intolerant forms, and the distinction between legal criticism and destructive activity became more difficult to make. But intolerance toward legal, if radical, criticism is the first step toward a relapse into authoritarian methods, which in turn promotes the relapse of the Radical Left into doctrinaire negation of the state. It is here that the danger can be discerned—a gradual undermining of the constitutional consensus among all democrats, and with it the vital mutual toleration among right-wing and left-wing supporters of the democratic order itself.

Loss of National Roots

A LAST REASON, finally, for the lack of a sense of assurance in the self-awareness of the Germans of the Federal Republic—the uncertainty about their collective identity which springs from their loss of national roots. This uprootedness has a number of different aspects. But all of them go back to the dual failure to work out a comprehensive and conscious attitude to Hitler's Third Reich on one side, to earlier German history and its manifold cultural traditions on the other.

The insufficient "digestion" of National Socialism, its roots and its horrors, is today a commonplace of inner-German and of international discussion. Of course there exist some excellent books—as well as many valuable television programmes—about this most difficult of all subjects, but nothing can compensate for the failure in this field of the German schools since the collapse of the Third Reich. This failure began in the first post-War generation—largely due to the teachers, who wanted to avoid questions about their own role during the Nazi period, and also to the initial lack of new textbooks—and has persisted in the form of a general turning-away from national history: indeed, from any instruction in history conceived as an answer to the question of one's collective origin and identity. In this turning-away, the allegedly progressive dissolution of the subject into an incoherent collection of examples for "sociological laws" has played a hardly less destructive role than the earlier attitude that repressed the embarrassing subject more or less openly, without benefit of an ideological smokescreen.

THIS REPRESSION of the national past is all the more significant because it could not remain confined to the Hitler period. It has led to the Nazi horrors opening like an abyss between the German post-War generations and their earlier history. Many members of the first post-War generation simply took flight from history because they felt unable to accept their own identity as Germans. The youth of today accepts

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that identity as a fact, but no longer connects it with any particular meaning or content. The consequences are all the more serious because the culture, in the sense of the values determining the form of life of the Germans in the Federal Republic, has radically changed since the post-War reconstruction—and changed in a largely unconscious way.

Before 1945, the Germans' form of life had never been exclusively determined by their cultural affiliation with the West. Less purely Western than that of the Poles living geographically further East, it had contained a peculiar mixture of Western and "Eastern" elements at least since the great cultural split of the Reformation. For German Lutheranism had unlike the Calvinist Reformation in the West, not produced a new moral code of workaday conduct issuing in an individualism geared to material success. It had put a stronger emphasis on communal solidarity and obedience to secular authority, but also on the inner life of the individual—an emphasis which exhibited some features akin to Eastern Orthodox Christianity.[2]

The resulting cultural resistance to the form of life of the modern West has found ever new expressions—from German philosophical idealism to the polemic-propagandist alternative between "*deutscher Kultur*" and "*westlischer Zivilisation*", from the German youth movement to existential philosophy—and has greatly influenced the self-awareness of the Germans. A scholar of Max Weber's truly universal interests could still assign to the Germans a special cultural mission between "Anglo-Saxon materialism" and "Russian barbarism." During all this time, the "Western" and "Eastern" value components in the attitudes and conduct of the Germans were by no means sharply separated on regional lines. Both affected the lives of all Germans as a kind of permanent tension, with now productive, now explosive results.

THE GERMAN CATASTROPHE of 1945 and the partition of Germany and Europe have radically changed that situation. The idea of a special cultural mission of the Germans between West and East has ceased to be conceivable after Hitler's destructive "mission." The same cataclysm, however, has turned the Western part of Germany for the first time into a completely "Western" country, in which the bourgeois form of life of the modern West has fully prevailed. The citizens of the West German Federal Republic are not only materially more affluent and secure, not only more "consumption oriented" than they ever were—they are also on the whole more "civilised" in dealing with each other; they are less inclined to show rough edges and are, if you like, "smoother" and more "conformist" in their daily life. The much-lamented "Americanisation" is only an extreme and particularly visible form of this one-sided "Westernisation."

Yet deeply rooted cultural traits may well disappear from the surface in the aftermath of a historical cataclysm—they do not for that reason cease working underneath. In the glittering consumers' society of the Federal Republic, the German longing for "community" and for "the inner life" has not been truly overcome but rather, repressed. That is why, I believe, it has broken through once again in sections of the young generation, explaining in part why here the generational conflict appears so much deeper, why the "Left" sub-culture is so much more persistent than in other Western societies. The "Return of the Repressed" in a society whose collective sense of identity is disturbed may well be the deepest reason for the nagging inner restlessness behind the outward stability.

Is There a Therapy?

I HAVE ANALYSED the sense of insecurity and restlessness in the German Federal Republic as if we were dealing with a kind of "collective neurosis"—the sequel to a series of traumatic shocks and forced adjustments to reality that were accompanied by processes of repression rather than worked through on the fully conscious level.

To be sure, the concept of "collective neurosis" serves here as a mere analogy. It is not put forward as an adequate explanation—hence the inverted commas, for there is no such thing as a collective psyche. The limits to such an analogy become most obvious once we raise the question of "therapy." You cannot put a nation, or part of a nation, on the analyst's couch. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine any "treatment" for the phenomenon which I have described that would not be based on the effort to bring its causes into consciousness—not by a therapeutic dialogue with each individual citizen, but by public debate and a goal-oriented process of education. If my diagnosis is correct, this "bringing into consciousness" should concentrate on three kinds of problems: (1) the role of tolerance in dealing with critics of "the system"; (2) recent German history; and (3) the role of Western and non-Western elements in German culture.

None of the great Western democracies

[2] Cf. Franz Borkenau's pioneering essay on "Lutheranism", in *Horizon*, September 1944.

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finally stabilised itself before the principle of tolerance towards dissenters was established. The proclamation of the common cause of all democrats, which stood at the cradle of the Federal Republic, is sound enough, but insufficient as a principle of tolerance: democratic tolerance, to be credible, must apply also to radical critics of democracy so long as their activity is exercised within the democratic legal order. The tolerance here advocated is not, of course, indifferent *laisser-aller*; it presupposes a readiness to fight the opponents of a democratic order with arguments. (I had occasion to demonstrate that readiness at a time and place when it was particularly needed—a German university in the late 1960s.) But it does imply that such critics are not to be impaired in their freedom of opinion nor be morally defamed so long as they keep within the law. In Germany, we shall have to live for the foreseeable future with minorities of radical opponents of the democratic order. We must, therefore, *learn* to live with them, and increasingly to integrate them in our democracy—by our arguments, but also by the model of our own behaviour, as older democracies have done successfully in dealing with larger anti-democratic minorities.

TO MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE concept of tolerance prevail in the Federal Republic of Germany is primarily a task for public discussion. But this must be supplemented by education for tolerance. There can be no education for democracy that is not education for respecting a differing opinion, however erroneous or even harmful one may think it. American liberal education since John Dewey's time (though it may have left much to be desired in the spreading of knowledge) may well be held up as a model of an integrating democratic education in that sense. The "learning goal" of tolerance is missing in all too many "teachers' directives" in the German Federal Republic.

Serious public discussion of the rise, the course and the disaster of National-Socialist rule is by no means lacking in the Federal Republic—neither in its literature nor in the mass media. For decades the gap in a school education which ought to have assured the needed basic knowledge has been all the more striking. The first condition for filling that gap is the restitution of the teaching of *history* as an independent subject in those states where it has been absorbed into the teaching of Social Science, in the course of ill-conceived "reforms." And it should be clearly understood that modern teaching of history cannot be confined to memorising dead facts and figures, or be allowed to drown crucial facts in a wealth of "interpretation", but must transmit the essential facts in an understandable context. In an image of history thus regained—oriented to the question of the origin and development both of one's own nation and of the larger community of European nations of which it forms part—both the unmitigated horrors of the Hitler period and the positive achievements of a far larger past will find their place. Only thus can future German generations reject the false alternative between denial of national identity and relapse into national arrogance, and emerge into critical self-awareness.

FINALLY, THE PROBLEM of Western and non-Western elements in German culture and identity requires a comprehensive public debate before it can be presented successfully in school education. It seems to me that, historically, Germany has been both part of the West and something special. German history is an integral part of the history of Europe—yet a part with special features of its own. Outside the West, Germany has never existed; inside the West, it has always furnished a special contribution springing at least partly, in the sense explained above, from "non-Western" sources. Today, responsible Germans are faced with the dual task of awakening in public debate and education a consciousness of Germany's indissoluble ties to the West and of her peculiarity—and of interpreting that peculiarity as both an opportunity and a danger.

At a time when the one-sided over-emphasis on individual struggle for success, characteristic of the capitalist epoch of Western development, is viewed throughout the West as a disturbance in the necessary balance of basic Western values and to that extent as a developmental aberration,[3] the stronger German tradition of the longing for community (*Gemeinschaft*) may be able to offer a positive contribution. Yet the Germans must be the last to forget that over-emphasis on the non-Western elements in their identity led them, in a still recent past, into a destructive and self-destructive blind alley. Only if the potential value and the potential danger of the special German character are made conscious at the same time—when membership in Western civilisation as an original element is consciously accepted, and opposition of German originality against the West is consciously rejected—only then will the Germans of the Federal Republic regain a balanced sense of their own role.

[3] See Daniel Bell, *Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976), and my review, "Capitalist Dynamics and Western Values", *Dissent* (Summer 1976).

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Remembering Rousseau

A Bicentennial Essay—By MAURICE CRANSTON

IN THE 200 years since Rousseau died—even, indeed, in the 227 years since his first essay appeared in print—readers have disagreed sharply in their understanding of what he intended to say. He himself admitted there were contradictions in his writings; but he felt that what he had to say could not be expressed according to the rules of clear and witty exposition as practised by Voltaire and the other *philosophes* of the Enlightenment. Rousseau had complex attitudes to what he considered, not unjustifiably, to be complex problems; and among the most complex, he felt, were those of politics.

One of the many puzzles about his attitude to politics is his attitude to the politics of his native republic of Geneva. Although he ran away from that city at the age of sixteen, and never returned for more than a few days at a time, he always proudly described himself a "*citoyen de Genève*" (notwithstanding the fact that he had forfeited his right to do so when he became a Catholic convert in Turin). The model of the Genevan city-state haunted his thoughts on the subject of politics, and yet in all his writings, both published and unpublished, he has relatively little to say about the politics of Geneva.

In the summer of 1737 party strife in Geneva blew up to the point of civil war. Rousseau, who was then aged 25, was actually there at the time, and witnessed the events in person; the surprising thing is that his response was one of absolute neutrality. The occasion of the dispute was the long-lived struggle between the government (dominated by the patrician families) and the popular opposition, who wished to assert the rights of the citizens in general against the privileges of the hereditary families. One might have expected Rousseau, in view of the staunch republican opinions he so often expressed, to have been solidly on the side of the citizens' party. But this is not the case at all.

In letters he wrote at the time[1] he expressed only dismay that the civil disorder was holding up the payment of an inheritance he had come to Geneva to collect. Moreover, when he recalled the events 40 years later in writing his *Confessions*, he spoke only of seeing his two great friends, the bookseller Jacques Barillot and his son Jacques-François Barillot, coming out of the same house armed to fight on opposite sides of the civil war: the father for the government, the son for the rebels. "This terrible sight made such a vivid impression on me that I swore never to participate in any civil war. . . ."[2]

Then again, in the chapter of *The Social Contract* which deals with the subject of "Elections" Rousseau draws a comparison between Geneva and Venice which suggests that there is really not much difference between the two republics:

> "It is a mistake to regard the government of Venice as a genuine aristocracy. For while the Venetian people has no part in the government, the Venetian nobility is itself a people. A multitude of poor Barnabotes never comes near any magistrature, and their nobility consists only of the empty title of Excellency and the right to attend meetings of the Great Council. But since that Great Council has as many members as our General Council in Geneva, its illustrious councillors have no more privileges than our own plain citizens. Hence, apart from the extreme disparity in size between the two republics, the burgesses of Geneva correspond precisely to the patricians of Venice; our natives and our inhabitants correspond to the townsmen and the people of Venice, and our peasants to their subjects of the mainland. To sum up, from whatever point of view the Venetian Republic is considered, apart from its size, its government is no more aristocratic than our own. The whole difference

[1] *Correspondance complète de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (ed. R. A. Leigh, Oxford, 1967–1978), vol. I, pp. 44–48.

[2] J.-J. Rousseau, *Oeuvres complètes* (Editions de la Pléiade, Paris, 1959), vol. I, p. 216.

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lies in the fact that we have no head of state who holds office for life, and so we have not the same need for the method of election by lot."[3]

This is the paragraph which Voltaire said was of a "*fausseté révoltante*",[4] and one can imagine that many proud Genevans would have read it with even more indignation: for if Voltaire was shocked by the suggestion that Venice was no more aristocratic than Geneva, they must have been shocked by the suggestion that Geneva was no less aristocratic than Venice. Perhaps we should bear in mind that Rousseau's own memories of the social system of Geneva were far from happy.

HE HAD BEEN BORN INTO a family well established in the Geneva bourgeoisie, a family, as he put it, "whose manners distinguished it from the people"; but his father, having first married somewhat above his station, went rapidly down in the world, moving literally from the elevated district of Geneva where the better-class families lived, to the low-lying working-class parish of St Gervais.

Jean-Jacques' grandfather, Daniel Rousseau, was a political activist, a supporter of the opposition to the patrician monopoly of power in Geneva, and he seems to have been happy enough in the milieu of artisan-radicals. But Jean-Jacques' father, Isaac Rousseau, was not; he felt himself to be a natural aristocrat who had been cheated of his rights. Rather than fretting with the radicals over the existing injustices of the Genevan government, he brought up his son like a patrician to cherish the ideals of republican virtue which the city of Geneva was supposed to share with ancient Rome, and to be a patriot. Rousseau's education at his father's knee reached its peak in studying the heroic biographies of Plutarch; and Rousseau tells us in his *Confessions*, "I was a Roman before I was twelve. . . ."

In fact, by the time he was ten, the readings from Plutarch came to an end because Isaac Rousseau had been forced to leave Geneva as a result of challenging a person of higher rank than himself to a duel, not only making a "gentleman's" appeal to the sword, but when he was told he was no gentleman, actually wielding the sword. With Isaac Rousseau thus exiled from Geneva, and from his son's life, Jean-Jacques became the ward of his mother's brother, Colonel Bernard, under whose care he was brought up for some years with his cousin, Abraham, *en pension* with a Calvinist pastor in a village outside the city walls. All went well until the day came for the two boys to be prepared for a career: Abraham was set on the way to become an army officer like his father; Jean-Jacques was sent back to the proletarian quarter of St Gervais to be a living-in apprentice with a coarse and brutish engraver. "Abraham was a boy of the fashionable quarters: I, wretched apprentice, was no more than a child of St Gervais. There was no longer equality between us, in spite of our birth; it would have been *infra dig* for him to continue our association."[5]

LIKE HIS FATHER, Jean-Jacques had come down in the world, and, like his father, he found the situation so intolerable that he ended up by running away from Geneva. The escape that was open to him was to change his religion; the Counter-Reformation was still active in the duchy of Savoy on the borders of Geneva, where Catholic missionaries were on the look-out for potential converts among young people who ran away from Calvinist Switzerland.

Savoy was still a more or less feudal type of society, and it was to the aristocracy of Savoy that Rousseau turned, as a refugee, for help. He went first to the *curé* of Confignon, because (as he tells us) he knew that that *curé* was a person of noble blood; and as he wandered afterwards from Confignon to Annecy, he recalls that he made his way to the walls of every feudal château, dreaming of making friends with the lord and lady of the castle and winning the hand of the daughter. Rousseau says he never felt any sexual attraction to lower-class girls. He liked only those with good clothes and well-dressed hair and delicate complexions. All the working girls he speaks of in the *Confessions* are described ungraciously; and even middle-class girls seem to have left him unmoved. It is the upper-class young ladies who figure in his fantasies, his memories, his *rêveries*. It is odd that he should have ended up with an illiterate laundry-maid as his resident mistress.

His quest for aristocratic society in Savoy and Piedmont was not unsuccessful. In Turin, the Comte de Gouvon took Rousseau into his *palazzo* as a footman; his son the Abbé de Gouvon promptly transformed him into his secretary, and set about teaching him to appreciate literature. Then, back in Savoy, Rousseau settled down to life with his benefactress, his protectress, his "foster-mother", the Baronne de Warens.

[3] *The Social Contract* (Penguin, 1968), pp. 155–56.

[4] Pléiade, Vol. III, p. 1494.

[5] Pléiade, Vol I, p. 42.

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MADAME DE WARENS was not, it is true, very highly placed in the European aristocracy. The title she bore had been bought with an estate in the Canton de Vaud for her husband by her father-in-law at the time of her marriage; it had been alienated when her husband sold the estate after she had deserted him and ruined him financially; he had ceased to call himself le Baron de Warens. But being a baroness was an important part of the role she played in the duchy of Savoy, as an aristocratic Swiss convert helping the conversion of others, supported financially in this pious work by the King of Sardinia and the Bishop of Annecy.

DIDEROT

Madame de Warens has always had a bad press. She was something of an adventuress, undoubtedly; and her sexual morals were not those of middle-class respectability. But she was a woman of great generosity and considerable culture; she educated Rousseau. She provided the intellectual formation which enabled him to become the writer he eventually became. She did not, however, contribute much to his political education. Her own conception of politics was a limited one. She saw politics as intrigue; and, characteristically, she tried to win further favour with the King of Sardinia by engaging in espionage. In any case, so long as Rousseau lived with Madame de Warens in Savoy—a duchy which had declined into being a mere province of the Kingdom of Sardinia, a province governed by Italian bureaucrats and intendants—Rousseau was far removed from anything that deserved the name of politics.

However, at the age of 27, Rousseau went to spend a year in a more intellectually envigorating place, Lyons in France, where, by good fortune, he stepped straight into the French Enlightenment. He became tutor to the family of Monsieur de Mably, whose two brothers were the Abbé de Condillac, the Lockean philosopher, and the Abbé de Mably, the pioneer socialist theorist. And when at the age of 30, Rousseau went to Paris to seek fame and fortune, he became an intimate friend of Denis Diderot, the editor of the *Encyclopédie*.

ROUSSEAU'S THINKING about politics defined itself thereafter in the context of two sorts of stimulus: the experience of living in a great Kingdom and his encounter with the political views of the Enlightenment; though perhaps it is only fair to remember that he had already studied, in the library of Madame de Warens, the writings of such political philosophers as Hobbes, Locke, Pufendorf, and Burlamaqui. At M. de Mably's house in Lyons, Rousseau became conscious of himself as a "republican", a citizen of Geneva, a stranger in the world of monarchs and princes. A revealing document here is a poem he wrote to one of his friends in Lyons, the surgeon, Parisot.

In this poem[6] Rousseau refers to himself as a man from Geneva "born free", and brought up to know that through his birth as citizen he had the right to participate in the supreme power of his native republic, a member of its sovereign body. He then goes on to say such things as: "I have learned to respect an illustrious nobility" and "It would *not* be good in society for there to be less inequality between the ranks." He adds the worthy sentiment that while he looks up humbly to those higher than himself in rank and birth, he may at least hope to equal them in virtue.

Of course nobody is on oath in writing poetry; but these verses do give us some idea of what Rousseau felt during his first experience of living in France, befriended by the *noblesse de robe* of Lyons. Then in Paris he met the political theory of the Encyclopaedists. Not all the Encyclopaedists, assuredly, held the same political views; but the characteristic doctrine was that expressed in a moderate form by Voltaire and in an extreme form by the Baron d'Holbach—enlightened despotism.

The Encyclopaedists were immensely in-

[6] Pléiade, Vol. I, pp. 1136-1144.

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fluenced by Bacon—they spoke a lot about Locke, but Bacon was really their hero; not Locke with his gospel of liberal constitutionalism, but Bacon with his radical scheme to wipe away religion and traditional philosophy and replace it with the rule of science and technology aimed at improving the life of man on earth. Science was to be the salvation of mankind. Bacon's personal project was to make James I a despot who would use his absolute powers to govern scientifically as Bacon advised him to govern; and this was the package which Voltaire, Holbach, and Diderot tried to sell such monarchs as Frederick II of Prussia and Catherine the Great of Russia.

Bacon had no success in England, where a politically-minded public was too attached to its civil liberties, to the law, and to parliament to want any kind of despotism. But in France, where there was no such electorate and no such freedom for anyone to want to conserve, the doctrine of enlightened despotism had a definite appeal—especially to the bourgeois mind. To Voltaire, at any rate, the politics of enlightened despotism coincided entirely with the interests of the bourgeoisie: the enemy, in his eyes, was the Church and the privileged nobility.

WHEN ROUSSEAU FIRST ARRIVED in Paris in 1742 at the age of 30, with the aim of winning fame and fortune, he was caught up with his friend Diderot in this flood of Enlightenment ideology and bourgeois aspiration, only to repudiate it later as part of what he called his "reform." An important stage in his political education was a year he spent, between the age of 31 and 32, as secretary to the French Ambassador in Venice, the Comte de Montaigu. This was in many ways an unfortunate experience, but it was instructive.

The French Ambassador was a retired brigadier with no qualifications or aptitude for diplomacy. Rousseau, who was efficient and quick, and could speak Italian, performed the duties of Embassy Secretary. It was a time when he was ambitious, yearning for what he called "*gloire*" and "*fortune*." He bought himself expensive elegant clothes in Paris, and fancied himself as a diplomatist, practising an aristocratic profession in the service of the greatest King in Europe. But this is not how the Ambassador regarded him; the Ambassador saw him as his personal clerk, little better than a valet. His Excellency, who was not an easy man, became incensed when Rousseau put on the airs of a fellow diplomatist, stretched himself languidly in the armchairs of the Embassy, or demanded to have the Embassy gondola at his personal disposal. There were heated words on both sides; and within a year Rousseau was sacked in the most humiliating manner possible. But at least he had had time to learn how Venice was governed, and to start writing a book on *Political Institutions,* which led to the publication of his *Social Contract;* and time also to acquire a taste for Italian opera.

Moreover, as soon as Rousseau returned to Paris, his luck changed. He found a pleasant job as secretary in the family of an immensely rich tax-farmer named Dupin and lived with them in the most beautiful of all French *châteaux,* that at Chenonceaux. He published works about music, composed operas and ballets, wrote plays, and even prepared one of Voltaire's works

VOLTAIRE

for the stage. He was indeed well on the way to achieve the *gloire* and *fortune* he hoped for as an intellectual of the Enlightenment, living in the context of the moneyed Paris bourgeois society which had opened its arms to him.

THEN AT THE AGE of 37 he had that famous "illumination" which led him to alter his way of life altogether. Every reader of the *Confessions* must remember the story Rousseau tells of his walk to Vincennes to visit Diderot when Diderot was imprisoned there, and his discovering on the way an advertisement for a prize essay at Dijon on the subject of whether the revival of the arts and sciences has improved men's morals; and his realisation, in a blinding flash, that such

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progress had in fact corrupted morals. Hardly able to breathe, let alone walk, he tells us, he sat down under a tree and wept.

The result was a *Discourse* which won the Dijon prize and earned the author immortality. Diderot encouraged Rousseau to compete, but the *Discourse* is in fact a sustained attack on everything that Diderot believed in, and everything that the *Encyclopaedia* was intended to promote. The kind of things Rousseau says in his first discourse were being said by others, but not so eloquently; and besides, those others were reactionaries. Rousseau was an *Encyclopaedist,* one of Diderot's most valued contributors.

IT WAS REMARKABLE that someone in the radical camp should make such an attack on Baconian ideas. For Rousseau claimed that science, far from saving us, was bringing ruin on mankind; progress was an illusion; the development of modern culture had made men neither happier nor more virtuous. Virtue was possible, he said, only in simple societies, where people lived austere and frugal lives; in modern sophisticated cultures, man was corrupt, and the greater the sophistication, the greater the corruption. Rousseau invoked the authority of Plato to support his case; for had not Plato said that all so-called scientific knowledge was not knowledge at all, and proposed that poets and artists be banished from an ideal republic?

To Diderot, a cheerful and tolerant man, all these arguments were so many entertaining paradoxes, not to be taken too seriously. But clearly a man who did take them seriously could not remain in the position in which Rousseau had placed himself as a young intellectual of the Enlightenment seeking fame and fortune. A radical change in his way of life was inevitable, especially after he had won the prize at Dijon for his essay, and his opinions became publicly known. One of the first steps he took was to renounce the ambition of making a fortune, and to quit the job he had been given in the office of his rich friend, Dupin de Francueil—a job in which he might have lined his own pockets substantially. It was at this time that Rousseau must have written one of his most interesting and least known essays, his unfinished *Discours sur les richesses.*

This paper is among the manuscripts of Rousseau in the Public Library at Neuchâtel, in Switzerland, where the fragments were pieced together by a former librarian, Félix Bovet, and published by him, with some omissions, through a small Paris bookseller[7] in 1853, but never reprinted, even in editions of Rousseau's works which claim to be complete. The discourse is addressed to one Chrysophyle—who is doubtless Rousseau himself—and is designed to persuade the recipient to give up his project of making a fortune. Chrysophyle, we learn, desires to become rich only in order to have the means to do good in the world. His wealth is going to be used to relieve the sufferings of his less fortunate fellow men. The author argues that this project is one that can never be accomplished. First, he points out that a poor man can accumulate a fortune only by saving every penny he acquires; he must cultivate habits of avarice, and thus, in preparing for the distant future when he will give away liberally, he must harden his heart against any kind of generosity. Secondly, when that remote day dawns, and his fortune is made, the newly-rich man will no longer look upon the world from the perspective of a poor man. The poor man is sensitive to the evils of poverty precisely because he is poor himself; but once he is rich, why should he continue to feel the same way? Then again, by what means is a fortune to be made? A poor man can be honest; a man born rich can be honest; but it is not so easy to be honest while devoting one's life to the activity of getting rich: for the readiest ways of making a profit are often the least ethical ways. So Rousseau concludes that the idea of becoming rich in order to do good in the world is an impossible project, because the effort of getting rich will deprive a man of the desire to do good as soon as he acquires the power to do it.

It is important to notice that this discourse is not an attack on hereditary wealth; it is an attack not on the values of the aristocracy, but on those of the acquisitive bourgeoisie, of the people by whom Rousseau was befriended in his early years in Paris, the Dupins and the Poplinières—and, of course, of such well-off bourgeois intellectuals as Holbach and Voltaire. The reason for thinking that Rousseau addressed the discourse to himself is that he had hitherto looked upon his project of making money as one designed solely to enable him to provide material help for his old benefactress, Madame de Warens, in her years of sickness and need; he had never desired to make money for himself.

"In February, 1751", Rousseau writes in the *Confessions,* "I renounced for ever all ideas of fortune and advancement in the world."[8] Ironically, having thus renounced all ideas of fortune, he promptly acquired enormous fame. But it was not simply as the author of the prize discourse on the arts and sciences that Rousseau became a celebrity. He became even better

[7] Charles Reinwald, 15 rue des Saintes-Pères, Paris.

[8] Pléiade, Vol. I, p. 362.

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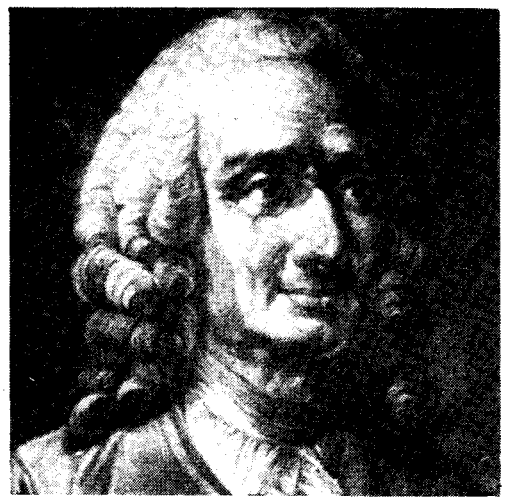
known as a musicologist, or more precisely as a leading protagonist in the great controversy about music which excited Paris in the early 1750s. His adversary was Jean-Philippe Rameau.

RAMEAU, BORN IN DIJON in 1683, was nearly 30 years older than Rousseau. After studying music in Italy, he had held various appointments as a church organist in different parts of France until, at the age of 39, he settled in Paris and made his name with his *Treatise on Harmony*. This attracted the interest of La Poplinière, one of the richest bourgeois patrons of the arts, whose support henceforth enabled Rameau to devote his time to composition.

Rameau was a disagreeable and boorish man, but his genius was such as to command universal respect. He was a great composer and a successful one; he had as many as six operas performed in Paris within a period of twelve months (1748-49) until Madame de Pompadour, who disliked him, contrived to have productions of his operas limited to two a year. His works, of course, are still performed and enjoyed. Moreover, Rameau was both musician and musicologist; his writings on harmony and other aspects of musical theory placed him at the head of his profession in Europe. Rameau was the most highly-educated, the most technically proficient musicologist of his time. Indeed Rousseau himself in the contributions on musical subjects he wrote for the *Encyclopédie* made the most deferential references to Rameau's work, as well he might, for Rousseau, when he was trying to teach himself the rudiments of musical theory, had done so with the help of the published works of the great French master. Respect, however, was not reciprocated. Rameau regarded Rousseau as a mountebank, a fraud, and a musical ignoramus; and since Rameau was a notoriously tactless man, he said so.

IN THE EVENT, Rameau had met a more formidable adversary than he realised. When Rousseau and Rameau became protagonists in a dispute about music, they might have seemed very unevenly matched: Rameau being the eminent scholar and Rousseau the self-taught amateur. But in truth the dispute was, at bottom, not only musical but ideological. This is why Rousseau was able to stand up to Rameau so effectively; and if there was a winner, it was Rousseau.

And even as a musician, Rousseau proved himself at least a potential rival to Rameau. For when Rousseau's opera *Le Devin du village* was performed at Fontainebleau (in October 1752, despite all Rameau's efforts to sabotage it), it was an immediate favourite with the King and the Court, and later became extremely popular at the Paris opera. However, the work that established Rousseau as the leading figure against Rameau in the musical controversy of the 1750s was his essay entitled *Lettre sur la musique française* (1753). This whole controversy, sometimes called "*La querelle des Bouffons*" because it was between the champions of two different schools of opera, excited intense passions in the public. Indeed in his *Confessions* Rousseau makes the bold and rather curious claim that this quarrel about music diverted men's minds from the constitutional crisis between the royal government and the Paris *parlements*, and so averted a revolution.



RAMEAU

Rameau appeared in this controversy as the exponent and defender of French opera; Rousseau was the proponent of the Italian opera. French opera, however, was not simply French; it was royalist, academic, cerebral, and sophisticated. Its complexity had everything to do with the Cartesian tradition of mathematical elaboration and rational order; its values were those of 17th-century French classicism. Harmony was its most intricate, difficult and impressive characteristic. Furthermore, the libretti of French opera proclaimed the Bourbon ideals of *gloire:* the splendour of kings being represented in the image of gods. Superior beings were depicted on the stage, and celebrated in music which appealed to superior minds, or which evoked, with trumpets and drums, military sentiments. French opera spoke to the ear in the same manner in which Versailles spoke to the eye.

However, we are thinking of 1752, when the

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grand style of Versailles was beginning to lose its hold on French sympathies. Rameau himself was an innovator; he had given new life to the French opera in the 1730s by introducing lightness as well as intricacy into his compositions, by providing elements of dance absent from earlier French opera, and, in general, carrying French music from the 17th into the 18th century; once having done all this, Rameau became the most impassioned defender of the French musical tradition he had so successfully modified.

Rousseau, in becoming the champion of Italian opera against the French, had the advantage of a better acquaintance than most French people with Italian music. He had first heard it as a boy of seventeen, wandering around Turin at a time when the King of Sardinia encouraged performances of the best Italian music as an ornament to his capital, and opened the doors of many concerts to one and all. And when Rousseau was working at the French Embassy in Venice he had free access to most of the opera houses; at that time there were a dozen opera houses in Venice compared to the one in Paris.

HOW DID ITALIAN OPERA differ from the French? First of all, whereas French opera was pompous and highbrow, Italian opera had an unmistakably popular quality. Its music was melodic and simple; anyone could sing its tunes, as indeed, in such places as Venice and Naples, everyone did sing them. Its themes, moreover, were domesticated. The persons depicted on the stage were less often gods than ordinary people. Consider, for example, *La Serva padrona* by Pergolesi, an opera which Rousseau himself prepared for publication in Paris. It was first performed in Naples in 1733, when the Paris stage was hardly yet accustomed to the innovations of Rameau. *La Serva padrona* is a delightful *intermezzo* built around the story of a Neapolitan bachelor who is tricked into falling in love with his maidservant and ends up happily married to her. The point of the story is that a maid is just as good as her mistress if only a man's eyes can be opened to it.

This egalitarian message made Pergolesi's opera all the more alarming to conservative opinion in Paris. And indeed the two sides in the *querelle des Bouffons* lined up from the start on a fairly obviously ideological basis. The party which supported the Italian opera included most of the liberal and progressive elements, among them the Encyclopaedists. These were the people disposed to welcome something new, something more "democratic", something that broke with Cartesian metaphysics and the Bourbon cult of *gloire* which the conservatives wished to defend.

IT IS IRONICAL THAT Rousseau should seem to appear as a *chef de file* of the progressive party at just this moment in his life when his *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences* had proclaimed his repudiation of the whole progressive philosophy. But it needs to be remembered that, while Rousseau was opposing Rameau on ideological as well as purely musical grounds, the basis of his position was not liberalism but romanticism. Here we have to consider what Rousseau was actually saying and not what he was thought to be saying.

Rameau, in the Cartesian manner, argued that there are fixed rules which apply to all musical expression, whereas Rousseau claimed that the arrangement or music must vary with what had to be expressed. Rousseau is thus pleading for romantic liberty in art, against the rationalist insistence on rigid rules. Then, again, whereas Rameau claimed that harmony was the central feature of music, reflecting the harmonic principles of nature itself, Rousseau asserted that melody was what mattered in music; harmony, he said, was an essentially artificial, even a "gothic" construction of the composer's intellect.

Here we are confronted by two different conceptions of nature. When Rameau spoke of nature he thought of nature as revealed in Newtonian as well as in Cartesian physics: the harmony of the spheres and the fixed order of the universe. Nature for Rousseau was what we see in the fields and forests—birds warbling and peasants singing—nature as opposed to culture, rather than nature (as it was for Rameau) God's great design as understood by the philosophical mind. It is against Rameau's Cartesian rationalism that Rousseau's argument is mainly directed. And if one speaks of this as an ideological rather than a philosophical confrontation, it is because Cartesian rationalism had by this time in French history taken on an ideological form, as a system of cultural values used to prop up the authority of the Church, the rigid organisation of the royal institutions, and the systematic hierarchy of society.

The other Encyclopaedists were attacking Cartesian rationalism for other purposes and with the aid of philosophical ideas largely derived from British empiricism. The attacks on Descartes by Voltaire and his friends were political attacks, hardly even veiled. They weighed into the *querelle des Bouffons* for the satisfaction of attacking another bastion of Cartesian culture, not because of its rationalism, but because of its conservatism. Unlike Rousseau, they wrote as liberals. There is no mistaking this if we look at a pamphlet contributed to the controversy

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by the joint-editor of the *Encyclopédie,* D'Alembert, entitled *De la liberté de la musique,* where D'Alembert writes:

> "Freedom for music means freedom to feel, and freedom to feel means freedom to think, and freedom to think means freedom to act, and freedom of action means the ruin of states. If we wish to preserve the Kingdom, let us preserve the opera as it is; and let us put a brake on licence in singing, if we do not wish licence in speaking to follow soon afterwards. . . ."[9]

This is D'Alembert speaking. It is not Rousseau. The two philosophers were on the same side in the *querelle des Bouffons*; but they were there for different reasons. Rousseau was as mindful as D'Alembert of the political dimension of the quarrel. "I had come", he writes in the *Confessions*, "to see that everything was intimately connected with politics, and whatever was done about it, no nation would be other than what it was made by the system of its government."[10]

BUT JUST WHAT political point is Rousseau trying to make? It is worth comparing the libretto of the opera which brought him such a success in Paris in 1752, *Le Devin du Village*, with Pergolesi's *La Serva padrona*. Rousseau's opera depicts a shepherdess, Colette, who is distressed because her betrothed, Colin, has gone off with an aristocratic lady. Colette seeks the aid of the village soothsayer, who advises her how to win back her lover, which she does; so that in the end shepherd and shepherdess are happily united. A very different tale from that of *La Serva padrona*, where the servant is shown to be the right bride for the master. In Rousseau's opera the argument is that people can best find love among their own kind, and that it is a mistake to try to trespass across the barriers of class.

Can we be surprised that *Le Devin du Village* became a favourite opera of the King and of Madame de Pompadour? The King did not often enjoy music, and Madame de Pompadour disliked Rameau's music because it was too highbrow; Rousseau's melodic style appealed to them both. So here we have another curious situation. The conservatives want traditional opera because it is more "correct", while the King and his intimates prefer the new Italianate opera, because it is more enjoyable.

Rousseau's situation is no less paradoxical. He provides in *Le Devin du Village*, so to speak, liberal music with a conservative libretto—and so conquers by his example a public he could not expect to persuade by his argument. And then that very conquest became an embarrassment to him. He did not desire it. He did not approve of Kings. He did not wish to become a Court musician in the service of a royal despotism.

His music had brought him fame, but it was fame of a kind he did not want. He rejected the opportunity of winning more fame through music under a king's patronage, just as a year or so earlier he had rejected the opportunity of winning fortune under bourgeois patronage. Once again he made a radical decision. He not only refused the offer of a royal pension: he gave up writing music altogether.

D'ALEMBERT

EVEN SO, HE HAD written enough about music to propel European music into new channels. After Rousseau music assumes the style of Mozart, whose *Bastien und Bastienne* is a revised version of *Le Devin du Village*; and then comes all that we know as romantic music. Rameau, it turned out, was the last of a certain line of operatic composers. We cannot say that Rousseau was the first of a new line, because he owed so much to Pergolesi and other Italian sources; but as a reformer of music his influence was crucial.

He abandoned his keyboard and he abandoned Paris at the same moment, and devoted his time henceforth entirely to writing, while living what he called a "solitary life" at Montmorency. He

[9] D. Launay (ed.), *La Querelle des Bouffons* (Genève, 1973), vol. III, pp. 2216-7.

[10] Pléiade, Vol. I, p. 404.

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was not, in fact, entirely alone there. If he had quit the society of his moneyed friends, the Dupins and the Poplinières, he found new friends in Maréchal-Duc de Luxembourg, the Comtesse de Boufflers, and the Comtesse de Houdetot, with whom, of course, he fell in love. Was it illogical of him, having turned his back on the bourgeoisie and the King, to have found satisfaction in the milieu of the old nobility? I think not.

ROUSSEAU

ROUSSEAU HAS THE REPUTATION of being a prophet of democracy and equality; but his own preference, if not always obvious, was for aristocracy. His reputation as an egalitarian is based on his (second) *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*, but at the very beginning of that work there is a dedication to the Republic of Geneva which contains this interesting sentence:

> "Having had the good fortune to be born among you, how could I meditate upon the equality which nature has established between men and the inequality which they have instituted among themselves, without noticing how the two are happily combined in this State, and made to coincide in the manner that comes closest to natural law, and is most advantageous to society, the maintenance of public order and the happiness of individuals."[11]

There is a tendency, not unnatural, to dismiss this whole dedication as empty hyperbole, since it was obviously written largely to further Rousseau's endeavours in the summer of 1754 to be readmitted to the established Calvinist church of Geneva and so to recover his rights as a citizen of that republic. It is certainly hard to believe that Rousseau ever sincerely considered the social and political arrangements of Geneva so perfect in practice, since he had once been so miserable as a result of them. But at least the sentence I have quoted gives a true inkling of his beliefs on equality. He disapproved of existing inequalities in most parts of the world, but he did not want to introduce a general equality in its place. What he looked for is the right mixture of "natural equality and institutional inequality", the hierarchy that "comes closest to natural law." What this formula plainly meant to Rousseau was the old Platonic ideal of everybody being where he ought to be, an aristocracy in the pure sense of the best being the most highly placed.

Democracy he unequivocally rejected. In Book III of the *Social Contract* he writes:

> "If there were a nation of gods, it would govern itself democratically; a government so perfect is not suited to men."

In the next chapter, Rousseau claims that aristocracy is the best of all governments, while making it clear that he is using the word "aristocracy" in a limited sense. He distinguishes three types of aristocracy; the first he calls "natural", and the example he gives is that of primitive societies, where the young yielded to the patriarchal wisdom of the heads of families; he suggests that this is how the Red Indians still govern themselves. He does not absolutely limit natural aristocracy to primitive societies, but he does say that it is "suited only to such peoples." Secondly, Rousseau speaks of an "elective" aristocracy, or "aristocracy in the true sense of the term", and while he calls this the best of possible governments, he makes it clear that it is an ideal that eludes us in the real world. Thirdly, he distinguishes "hereditary aristocracy" based on the accumulation of wealth in the hands of certain families, and he calls this "the worst of all governments."

He goes on to argue that elective aristocracy owes its merit not to method of election, but to the assurance that those elected will be wise and virtuous and remain so. This is what makes it so difficult to translate into reality. The difficulty that Rousseau stresses is that those elected wise

[11] Pléiade, Vol. III, p. 111.

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men can be expected to act more and more in accordance with their own will, and not in accordance with the general will. So Rousseau qualifies his assertion that an elective aristocracy is the best possible government by adding that it is the best government only so long as the aristocratic magistrates respect the liberty and sovereignty of the people. Unfortunately, he expects all magistrates, sooner or later, to trespass on the liberty and sovereignty of the people.

THIS IS ANOTHER PARADOX of Rousseau's political theory. He does not believe in the practicability of what he advocates. So far as the people are concerned, he wants them to be sovereign, to enact the fundamental laws of their state, since that is the only way for them to be at the same time free and ruled, or, in other words, the only way for them to rule themselves. But since Rousseau is convinced that ordinary people do not have enough brains to devise good laws, he says they will need a lawgiver, a Solon or Lycurgus, to construct their laws for them—a lawgiver who would most likely have to dupe the foolish populace into thinking he had received those laws from God. In a strict sense, an authentic popular sovereignty is an impossible enterprise from the outset.

As for government, Rousseau looks to an aristocracy of the wise and disinterested, but he believes that no government will remain wise and disinterested; so that an elective aristocracy is doomed in the long run. Popular sovereignty is born in inauthenticity, and aristocracy decays into despotism. Rousseau agrees with Aristotle that man is a *zoon politikon*; man's nature can only find fulfilment as a citizen. But God has not given all men enough brains or moral purity to realise their potentiality as a citizen; modern civilisation has corrupted them instead of improving them, as a simple civilisation might. As for the really good man—and Rousseau felt himself to be a really good man—he was forced amid all the corruption of the modern world to become a hermit, precisely because he could not realise his true nature as a citizen.

Rousseau saw his own life at Montmorency as that of a hermit. But, of course, this was an exaggeration. He spent much time with his socially exalted neighbours, and he felt more at ease with them than he did with the progressive intellectuals of the *Encyclopédié* or with the bourgeois millionaires of the Paris salons. And one can understand why.

FRENCH NOBLEMEN of ancient lineage such as the Duc de Luxembourg could look back to France as it was before the Bourbon dynasty had introduced centralised royal despotism and Richelieu destroyed their fortified castles. They remembered feudal France, when a noble lord was master of his dominions and owned only minimal obedience to the King. Of course the Duc du Luxembourg and his like were too young to have had actual memories of those days. But their historical imagination was based on well-established knowledge, and accompanied by strong feelings of resentment towards the royal absolutism and of contempt both for their noble relations who had allowed themselves to be transformed into courtiers at Versailles and for the bourgeoisie who had bought up so much of the wealth of the nation.

Their attitude to life was a form of romanticism. They knew their title to aristocracy was an empty one: it gave them privileges without power. They were superior in social rank, but abysmally inferior in political importance to the bureaucrats who served the King. When the Duc de Luxembourg learned that his friend and protégé, Rousseau, had been made the subject of a warrant for arrest, he could do nothing for him but help him to escape through a back door of the park of the *château*, and provide a carriage to convey him back to Switzerland.

The Duc and his kind in the *noblesse d'épée* had their dreams of a France that was dead, when the ideals of chivalry had proclaimed that only men of noble character should lead and protect the people. Their dreams found an echo in Rousseau, with his dream of an unborn world, where only the best men would be in positions of power and responsibility. They knew that their world was dead for ever; and he knew that his world would never exist for long, even if it came into being.

A certain melancholy hopelessness afflicted them equally; and this is another element of romanticism which Rousseau's work so often suggests, but never, of course, states, since such things cannot be stated. His upbringing in Geneva had given him his vision of an ideal society in which liberty went hand in hand with law. But the rebuffs he had received in Geneva, and then in other places, had taught him that his vision was only vision, and that the only way to preserve it was to live in the world of the imagination, and to leave the world of empirical reality to those who enjoyed it, such as the friend who became his great enemy, the tough, cunning, devious, amusing and none too scrupulous Voltaire.

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Allen Curnow

A Balanced Bait in Handy Pellet Form

Fluent in all the languages dead or living,
the sun comes up with a word of worlds all spinning
in a world of words, the way the mountain answers
to its name and that's the east and the sea *das meer*,
la mer, *il mare Pacifico*, and I am on my way to school

barefoot in frost beside the metalled road
which is beside the railway beside the water-race,
all spinning into the sun and all exorbitantly
expecting the one and identical, the concentric,
as the road, the rail, the water, and the bare feet run

eccentric to each other. Torlesse, no less,
first mountain capable of ice, joined the pursuit,
at its own pace revolved in a wintry blue
foot over summit, snow on each sunlit syllable,
taught speechless world-word word-world's ABC.

Because light is manifest by what it lights,
ladder-fern, fingernail, the dracophyllums
have these differing opacities, translucencies;
mown grass diversely parched is a skinned "soul"
which the sun sloughed; similarly the spectral purples

perplexing the drab of the dugover topsoil
explain themselves too well to be understood.
There's no warmth here. The heart pulsates
to a tune of its own, and if unisons happen
how does anybody know? Dead snails

have left shells, trails, baffled epigraphy
and excreta of such slow short lives,
cut shorter by the pellets I "scatter freely",
quick acting, eccentric to exorbitant flourishes
of shells, pencillings, drab or sunlit things

dead as you please, or as the other poet says,
Our life is a false nature 'tis not in
the harmony of things. There we go again, worrying
the concentric, the one and identical, to the bone
that's none of ours, eccentric to each other.

Millions die miserably never before their time.
The news comes late. Compassion sings to itself.
I read the excreta of all species, I write
a world as good as its word, active ingredient
30 g/kg (3%) Metaldehyde, in the form of a pellet.

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Two Poems by Peter Redgrove

Born

Born with a little cap of slime, his caul,
The midwife washed him, and the skin floated off,
She fished it out like a paper-bag,
Shut it in the dictionary, P-Z. Later
She peeled it off the page and folded it in a locket
She gave him on her death-bed, in the scent
Of coal-tar soap; even her death
Smelt like nurses; and when he wore it

For his own death he tried to rip the locket away:
It must be evil! for he wanted to rest
Closing his eyes but they were transparent
Like a caul and he saw the room unchanged
Except for his nurse who had arrived as his eyes shut.
She stretched out her arms as though he were drowning
But when he opened his eyes there was only his wife
Drowsing on a chair, but shutting them more people had arrived
With straining arms and faces about his bed,

And then the soap-smelling midwife bent and pulled at his face
And took a squalling red thing out of his head
With a little cap of slime, and he was awake
Among the grown-up people, his head being sponged
And the corpse floating off like tough paper in the bath.

Autobiosteography

When he was dug up his bones were found covered
With fine minute cursive writing which when rubbed
With lampblack stood out like a crabbed inventory that was
Notes for an autobiography composed as though he stood
In his bones with his flesh over his arm with his limp head
Reading what he had written over the everlasting portion of him;
It seemed to have been scratched with the diamond-point
Found loose in the grave at the site of the heart.
I thought that all bones had their live-story graved on them
Like a stony map of how I have used my flesh;
He did conscientiously what no one can escape,
Leaving stone maps of judgment. However, he
After writing that composition passed into the gallery
Where millions of soft gazes like a stream wear his bones away.
Dickens signed soiled collars on his American tour. Hosts
Pass through the sea, utterly changed, unscathed, without writing a word.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from France

3 Generations in Paris

By Claude Roy

NOWADAYS the authors of these five books happen to be all living in Paris.

Moshé Zalcman,[1] a Jewish tailor, is 75 years old. He has lived through ghettos in the provinces, the Cossacks, the pogroms, the 1914–18 War, the socialist anti-war movement (to prevent it ever happening again), the Communist Party, "bourgeois" prisons, departure for the "homeland of socialism", twenty years in the Soviet Union, famine, servitude, terror, ten years in the Gulag Archipelago, years of exile, rehabilitation, Warsaw, Paris. . . . He explains why, on returning from the camps, he refused to "take up his Party card again"—"When I realised how criminal the Party can be when it has a monopoly of power, I refused to rejoin. . . ."

Robert Antelme[2] and Jorge Semprun[3]: another generation, another war (1939–45). Another revolt. More camps. The same ones? Buchenwald and Kolyma: different names, same principle, same barbed wire. The *SS* and the *KGB* (ex-*Cheka*, ex- *NKVD*), different initials, same gang. Robert Antelme and Jorge Semprun are not alike in any way, but the Nazis in France impelled them towards the same struggle: resistance Resistance—this time, wearing the prisoner's striped pyjamas, enduring hardships intended to kill—against the humiliation designed to crush men's spirits: the same experience led them to make the same choice. In his admirable book on the concentration camps, *L'Espèce Humaine*, Antelme writes: "Taking up the struggle there meant fighting death with reason." In *Le Grand Voyage*, his fine first book on the concentration camps, Jorge Semprun writes that in the *Lager* a man is sometimes capable of stealing his comrade's bread but, "invincible animal" that he is, he is also capable of "sharing his last slice of bread to help his comrades."

On their return, Antelme and Semprun chose the Communist Party (French and Spanish, respectively) in order to continue "fighting death with reason" and "helping their comrades." Antelme was "excluded" from the Party in 1949, Semprun in 1964. In his political memoirs, *The Autobiography of Federico Sanchez*, Semprun writes:

> "The Communist Party is of no avail. By that I mean it is of no avail in seizing power, or in establishing socialism. . . . It does not put an end to the exploitation or the alienation of the workers: it merely reinforces and accentuates both."

Like Antelme, Semprun knows that the Gulag where Moshé Zalcman did his time with millions of other slaves is the *same camp* they themselves came back from. They know that the "main contradiction" is not between the "socialist camp" and the "capitalist camp", but between a society without concentration camps and without exploitation, and a society where the ruling class exploits, represses, imprisons and kills.

Yet another, a third generation? Robert Antelme and Jorge Semprun joined the Communist Party after Moshé Zalcman had already left it. Jean-Pierre Le Dantec[4] and the Broyelles[5] joined the Communist student organisation after Antelme had already left the Party, and when Semprun was on the point of leaving. Their experience proves that at least one of Marx's axioms needs no revision and is always true: When history repeats itself, tragedy becomes a farce.

BUT LET US EXPLORE further. History often mixes the genres. Tragedy often has farcical aspects; farce sometimes turns tragic. Revolted by a Party which repelled them, Le Dantec and the Broyelles then reinvented another party, which was purer, harder, and more reliable. Revolted by the Soviet Union, they put their confidence again in a new-style Workers' Fatherland, purer, harder and more reliable: Mao's China. Their adventures and misadventures proved shorter and less tragic than those of Antelme and Semprun. They, in turn, suffered less (relatively) than Moshé Zalcman and less than the revolutionaries of his generation or Lenin's and Stalin's millions of

[1] *Histoire Veridique de Moshe, ouvrier Juif et Communiste au Temps de Staline*. By MOSHÉ ZALCMAN. Editions Recherches, 49 F.

[2] *L'Espèce Humaine*. By ROBERT ANTELME. Gallimard (collection Tel), 310 F.

[3] *Autobiographie de Federico Sanchez*. By JORGE SEMPRUN. Seuil, 49 F.

[4] *Les Dangers du Soleil*. By JEAN-PIERRE LE DANTEC. Presses d'Aujourd'hui, 290 F.

[5] *Le Bonheur des Pierres*. By CLAUDIE ET JACQUES BROYELLE. Seuil (coll. Combat.) 39 F.

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victims. But the ending was similar, and their conclusions identical. Le Dantec: "Having started by rebelling against Stalinism, we ended up as Stalinists again. . . ." Claudie and Jacques Broyelle: "Rebellion against the Party's despotism led us to behaviour which was frequently even more despotic. . . ."

Only two of these six witnesses devote their testimonies to their experiences of Communism and Stalinism proper. Robert Antelme's masterpiece, truly sublime, austere and simple, is in fact only (if one may put it so) the story of his years in the camps. Though it does not indulge in a single sentence of philosophy, a single word of theory, Antelme's account is in fact a meditation on an ultimate experience, an investigation into a society which takes to the utmost extremes man's tendency to subject, exploit, and destroy his fellow human beings—a tendency which "normal" societies dilute, master, or repress. Although this great work ends with the author's departure from the camps, Antelme gives us a strong intimation of his later experience of Communism, as a survivor for whom the word has acquired an ineradicable meaning in the camps (which it still retains). The book ends before the deported Antelme discovers, several years later, that his German camp was in fact just a tiny island in a global Archipelago, where the "Communist" nations hold a leading place.

In this same Communist world, Moshé (the poor little Jewish tailor) and Jorge (the brilliant son of the Spanish ambassador) were to have very different experiences. It would be hard to imagine two men, two books, two styles more different from each other. Zalcman, whose memoirs were written in Yiddish, was little concerned with art. Semprun, with his virtuoso leaps in time and between the capitals of the world, has written, (as he says himself) a "very perverse and sophisticated" autobiography. From the ghetto to Belleville, from collective lodgings in Moscow to the huts in the camps, for ever sewing, cutting, toiling, ever the activist, Zalcman is to be found with the "simple folk" (as Stalin called them, in his fatherly goodness). Semprun, for his part, confesses that he has always been a political aristocrat, whether in the underground in France during the War or in Madrid under Franco. For the most part it is the humble citizens Zalcman meets—from the Russian seamstress who worked for him (and who got five years in the camps for stealing eight buttons) to the thieves and political prisoners of the camps. Semprun, on the other hand, is more often to be found with the great men of this world (who are, in fact, often small of soul), from Santiago Carrillo to Fidel Castro, the Nobel prize-winner Vicente Aleixandre to La Passionaria, Luis Miguel Dominguin to Hollywood stars; and he paints dazzling, often vicious portraits of them.

THERE ARE EXCEPTIONS, of course, In Moscow one day Zalcman does meet a "powerful" man: André Marty, before he became "Marty the policeman." Zalcman finds him a scornful, cruel brute of a man. While attending an executive committee meeting in East Berlin, Semprun, on the other hand, asks a charwoman, who works at the Party cadre training school, to dance with him "because she had blue eyes and a lissom body. . . ." He discovers that his partner has only one desire: to get to the West, and she asks him for help.

Having observed political life at the top, both the downtrodden Jewish proletarian and the dashing young man from Spain finally reach the same bitter conclusion. Zalcman was in fact exploited, humiliated, and ill-treated all his life. Put simply, he suffered slightly more in the "homeland of socialism" than he would have done elsewhere. He began there as a proletarian who was crushed by bosses with privileged access to special rations, exclusive shops, flats, that went with the job, travel and holidays. Meanwhile Zalcman and the "simple folk" were dying of hunger, exhaustion, and fear. Then he was a *zek* crushed by the Chekists and the camp guards. After that, a prisoner under house arrest whose only right was to make suits for "the bosses" free of charge. If that did not suit him the way to the camps was always open.

In Zalcman's bare tale and Semprun's acrobatic search for his lost Communist past, these "little Soviet bosses" and the great leaders of the "socialist camp" are seen through the keen eyes of the old wandering Jew and the gifted intellectual. Yet we realise they are identical products of an identical system. There is no real difference between the powerful committee secretaries or the *NKVD* agents—who dominate, manipulate, and put pressure on Zalcman when he leaves the camp—and Fidel Castro, whom Semprun meets in Cuba.

Moshé, ordered to Tiflis to fit a suit for the Party's first secretary, is then kept waiting for hours. He slyly observes all the bowing and scraping, the vulgarity of the bosses and the servility of their subordinates. He notes that "the first secretary hovers on the doorstep, bowing down before the secretary of the Central Committee, who in turn trembles and bows low to a member of the Supreme Soviet. . . ." Semprun, called to Havana at nine in the morning by Fidel, has to wait till ten at night. He is then taken to a stadium where he hears the Supreme Leader, surrounded by bodyguards, courtiers, and valets, saying that he, Fidel, needs to relax. Semprun

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then witnesses a game of basket-ball in which the team playing Castro allows him, with respect and servility, to score all the goals he wants. Received finally at two in the morning, Semprun has to listen to the Great Man explaining, non-stop for three-quarters of an hour, "the most elementary stupidities" about citrus-fruit production in Free Cuba. Fidel Castro then disappears, leaving Semprun to his thoughts.

"The Party sums up everything", said the same Fidel Castro at the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party. Moshé Zalcman and Jorge Semprun would agree. But not in the way Castro meant it. Zalcman knows in his reason, in his bones and from his worn-out life that the "Party" can only establish and "sum up" a society in its own image: bureaucratic, muzzled, criminal." Federico Sanchez tried to change the Party from inside, from above and by power of reason. Now he knows it was in vain. He tells his story in the knowledge that doing so may be pointless, because others never learn from one's own experience:

> "The young revolutionaries of today will think that all this is merely history, that times have changed, that they themselves will change the Party. They do not know that the Party will change them and that they will have to leave it if they want to stay true to themselves and remain revolutionaries."

HERE THE MERRY-GO-ROUND starts again. Jean-Pierre Le Dantec takes up the sequel to the story, now in a lower key, farcical and mocking. He has the right measure of honesty and humility (and confusion as far as the future is concerned) to give us a perfect documentary account of the road leading from the revolutionary dream to the sad awakening, "that farcical journey from the imaginary to the real." The same theme informs Claudie and Jacques Broyelle's kaleidoscopic notebooks, which, though less destructive in effect than the authors' *Deuxiéme Retour de Chine*, are nevertheless of a far-sighted perceptiveness.

> "We were mistaken. No: we were led astray. . . . We were guardians of hope, who preserved our innocence, our socialism which was always elsewhere, always different. The 'privilege' which the man of the Left accords to socialism is always granted to himself."

Having burnt their fingers on Stalinist-Maoist revolutionism these ex-mini-inquisitors and ex-true-believers now suffer the bewilderment of systematic doubt. Amid the endearing chaos of clearly defined despair and ill-conceived ideas, two main themes stand out in the authors' tentative conclusions: the murder of Marx, the father, and mistrust of the word "Revolution."

The trouble is that handing in one's Party card or disposing of the works of Babeuf, Buonarotti, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Mao and Guevara to the local second-hand bookshop does not rid one of those other revolutions, which never seek theory's permission to light the fuse, which never carry a party card, which bear no resemblance to any "scientific" analysis, erupting spontaneously when political forecasters and specialists least expect them.

One can vow never again to be a zealot of "Revolution", with its intellectual allures, its party apparatus, its ideology securely based on classic quotations—the real "Revolution", approved unanimously (of course) by a central committee. But what about the rebels of February 1917, what about the occupation of factories and land in Spain in 1937, the Budapest workers'

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councils in 1956, the proletarian uprisings in the Stalin-Allee, in Poznan, in Gdynia? What about the completely unplanned explosion of May 1968, which had no programme of any kind—what can one possibly say about all that? The trouble with Revolution is that it is reactionary. But the problem with revolutions is that they seek no one's permission to erupt.

European Notebook

By François Bondy

"C'est du Ionesco!"

Paris

FOR ONE REASON or another I had been thinking much of Eugène Ionesco those days. For one thing, it was his 65th birthday, but in France not even the "round" anniversaries are openly observed. Then there was Ionesco's moving tribute to a young friend who had suddenly died, and here again was his cry of anguish at being "abandoned", at suddenly being left alone. But mostly it was the grotesquerie of a recent East-West incident in Paris.

On the day that President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing received Leonid Brezhnev, there was a Paris party given for the Eastern European dissidents; and there, of course, was Ionesco (and what better link could there have been, the man who loved his French mother, rejected his Rumanian father, the "existentialist dissident" *par excellence*?).

But what could he have thought when Jean-Paul Sartre also turned up to give honour to the anti-Communist heretics who had put human rights before Left dogmas? Sartre, after all, criticised Khrushchev for having "gone too far" from the Party line, for having shattered the "Stalin myth" before the Russian people were really "ripe" and ready for it; and he had defended the imprisonment of Olga Ivinskaya, Boris Pasternak's companion (and the "Lara" of *Dr Zhivago*). Ionesco had always "belonged"; Sartre was a Johnny-come-lately who had slowly moved to where the Sorbonne rebels of '68 were then finding themselves, having given up Mao's Little Red Book and immersed themselves in Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*. (Solzhenitsyn himself, when he was in Moscow, had refused to see Sartre and de Beauvoir.)

Other spirits were on the move too. Michel Foucault declared that he too, in view of the circumstances (in France? in Eastern Europe?), would from now on publish his writings in *"Samizdat"* and circulate them clandestinely. Ionesco, drink in hand and incredulous, only asked: What police-censorship was driving him into the underground? And Foucault only answered, "That's a question that's not worth a reply. . . ."

BUT THEN Ionesco has always been a *provocateur*, sometimes in the avant-garde, sometimes in the rear guard: in the Rue de la Huchette theatre as the author of *La cantatrice chauve*, in his uniform as a member of the *Académie française*. I had been reading his recent book, *Antidotes*, and here again he is political and metaphysical, a committed writer and a critic of *engagement*, swinging between the personal and the profound. I once wrote a little book analysing all his writings, and I was surprised to note then that he considered his first play (revived at the tiny Huchette-Ionesco theatre) his best. Ionesco surprises, and is always surprised in turn. I recall that in Helsinki, at a UNESCO meeting, he listened to a high Soviet official (it was the Minister of Culture at the time, Mme Furtseva) abuse a jailed Russian writer for having "dishonoured" his native land, and he whispered to the official French delegate, "At that rate half of our writers of France would be behind bars . . . " to which the delegate replied coldly, "Quite so, and I wouldn't mind it in the least. . . ."

How is it that some of Ionesco's most remarkable plays are no longer staged? I haven't heard of a performance anywhere in Europe of *Rhinoceros* or *Tueur sans gages* for years. It would be typically *Ionesque* if their very "relevance" made them unplayable these days.

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Theatre directors in West Germany, working in the shadow of terrorism and political murders, have had their qualms about trying to stage Schiller's *Räuber* or Camus' *Les Justes*. And Ionesco's *Tueur sans gages* is, in my view, perhaps the strongest contemporary play about individual terror. The monologue of Behringer in the long last scene is a chilling attempt to understand the motives of the murderer, who remains unreachably recalcitrant against any efforts to be drawn into a dialogue and an explanation. What was it that drove him on to death and destruction—reason, religion, revenge? No answer. The victim almost begins to feel that it could be himself who is to blame. . . .

IONESCO LIKES TO SPEAK of the rhinoceros-like conformism of the intellectual class. No matter that the ideas and attitudes happen to be in conflict with those of the "silent majority", they are themselves controlled by a kind of herd instinct. And in the herd the conforming intellectual runs along as if it were the path of truth and righteousness. Ionesco, the maverick, the incorrigible individualist, always wants to break out.

As readers of ENCOUNTER must know from his various contributions to these pages,[1] he has not had it easy in the ideological Paris atmosphere, and he has often found himself as much outside the literary milieu as in the pre-War Bucharest of the Iron Guard. When he murmured his dissent about "collective inhumanity", he was instructed to make distinctions between social systems on Left and Right. Now there is a new generation which no longer accepts the easy manipulation of empty ideological categories, and with Ionesque-indifference refuses to be worried about being called "reactionaries" or even "running dogs of imperialism." With the emergence of the so-called *Nouveaux Philosophes*—Sartre, never one to be left behind, has run with them—the old monopoly of Left ideology was broken. Ionesco documented this with some satisfaction in his *Antidotes*; but where did it leave him, at once so happy and miserable in his role as the lonely challenger, one against all?

Returning to the theme of *Tueur sans gages* Ionesco suggests that the problem of the evil therein is insoluble. The "noble experiment" of building a Communist society in our time has demonstrated the futility of establishing a "great good place." In vain do the victims await from the murderers an explanation of the hate and the violence. "Hate has its justification, but no reason; it kills with a kind of innocence and even purity; we deal out death to others and thereby to ourselves. . . ." One thinks of the drama of the recent terrorist gangs in Western Europe, as the corpses of both victims and executioners begin to mount.

Alberto Moravia once remarked, when the talk turned to the relevance of Ionesco's *Tueur sans gages*, that the author hadn't quite understood the point of his own play. I liked that, in all its absurdity. And as a matter of fact Ionesco himself once wrote a play in which three critics take the stage and try to convince the playwright that they know it all better. . . . Indeed in Paris one still does say for bureaucratic entanglements "*C'est du Kafka*"—and for absurd situations, "*C'est du Ionesco!*"

[1] See: Eugène Ionesco, "Facing the Inferno" (November 1972), "Helsinki Notebook" (December 1972) and "Of Utopianism & Intellectuals" (February 1978).

Castles

A brave thrush has defused
a dangerous snail
and left the smashed shell on this battlement
where no mailed finger
has scratched away the lichen
and for centuries no visored eyes
have stared away,
over the dwarfed murderers and their banners,
to the welling, invincible sea.

John Wakeman

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George Szirtes

Shadowplay

(*Soldier with Boy 1956*)

Neither is what the other takes him to be:
though one is squatting low to meet the other
it is a smile he understands is faking
while both gain from his breach of privacy;
in lieu of the ones missing, son and brother,
he holds out the relations of his making,
presents a rifle and a magazine,
the photo of a child on a machine
still ticking over, parked under a tree.

Neither is what the other takes him to be:
the child remains elusive, reticent,
knowing himself under the heavy gun
to be capable of forming strategy;
the other's smile is just one more event,
the tokens may belong to anyone,
and victory may not go to the older
whose hand is resting snugly on his shoulder
in light around the shadow of the tree.

Neither is what the other takes him to be:
the evening sun, definitive and warm,
casts a shadow beside the sycamore
and brings to consciousness a parody
of click-clack gun and plaintive uniform,
and a small child who recognises war
not only in raised voices but the fact:
he plays a part whose aim is to attract
the depth of shadow under the tall tree.

Geoffrey Grigson

After the Epilogue

How selfishly alive we act his death,
Through Act 4, Scene 4 of his play.
How in the famous Epilogue,
In our false fine clothes,

We butter him with praise,
And now, our giant codpieces and red
Wigs returned to store, shabbily
Live out our own last days.

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A Special Book Section

Sociology Today

Where Have All the Workers Gone?

The Meaning of Work—By PHILIP ABRAMS

ONCE UPON A TIME work was invested with moral, heroic, even religious colours. *Robinson Crusoe* is a hymn to work. Writers from Wordsworth to Lawrence treated work not just as life-enhancing, in Bernard Berenson's vapid cliché, but as life itself, the generic activity. Whether voiced by Schiller, Shaftesbury or Marx, criticism of the practical realities of work sprang from a belief that work could and should be made worthy of the worker, could in principle measure up to the dignity of *homo faber*. Now we have *The Adventures of a Window-Cleaner* instead. The chill horror of Mrs Clennam is replaced by the sleazy horror of the Happy Hooker. *The Shepherd's Calendar* is succeeded by *Doctor in the House*. The call for the humanisation of work gives way to resigned recognition of its irretrievable trivialisation. When Max Weber was asked why, in the face of terrible personal and intellectual difficulties, he persisted with his mountainous, doomed sociological task he gave a reply which well expressed the old moral engagement with work: "to see how much I can endure." A rather different view was plainly being voiced by the colleague I met recently who in answer to my naive "What do you do?" offered, "Not much, but I enjoy it."

Weber himself well understood that as the social relationships and institutions of capitalism gathered momentum, worldly asceticism would no longer have to provide the cultural and psychological impetus to work. What he did not foresee was that the momentum of capitalism might develop a culture within which attitudes to work such as his own would seem weird, or merely silly; within which life would be understood as an escape from work and in which the most compelling reason for working would be the desire not to work. Nevertheless, a sample of recent studies of work suggests that it is just such a world that is now taking shape. It is not simply that, as a student blandly advised me a little while ago, "The Protestant work ethic doesn't mean anything to us, you know", nor even that we are witnessing a massive version of what Goran Palm calls "the flight from work"[1]; it is that work has become anti-life.

At first sight the picture presented by these books is confusing. Several very different, contradictory, things seem to be going on at the same time. More people than ever before want work—not just the formally unemployed, but whole populations in underdeveloped countries and women everywhere. Simultaneously, more people than ever before want to escape from work—Palm's year on the shop floor of one of Sweden's largest manufacturing companies brought him face-to-face with a labour force deeply depressed by the banal unpleasantness of work and building their personal worlds entirely as worlds of non-work.

Then again, the relationships of work are more deeply fraught with conflict of all kinds than they have been for many years—all indicators confirm the claims of Crouch and Pizzorno about the resurgence of industrial conflict. But the relationships of work are also being treated as more profoundly unimportant than they have been for many years—psychologically, the worker has "gone home" as it were.

NEW FORMS OF WORK emerge, new occupations, new services, new technologies, new ways of enhancing and enlarging jobs—but as Duncan Gallie found in his meticulous, surely authoritative study of workers in highly automated plants in Britain and France,[2] within the

[1] *The Flight from Work*. By GORAN PALM. Cambridge University Press, £4.95.

[2] *In Search of the New Working Class*. By DUNCAN GALLIE. Cambridge University Press, £9.50, paper £3.95.

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new forms the experience of work seems to remain grimly unchanged: the "carrot bastard" controls a process that has only one meaning, money.

The common setting for these divergent tendencies is the stupendous achievement of capitalism in turning work from an activity into a commodity. Once that has been accomplished—and more than anything else it is that accomplishment which these studies record—once all concerned understand that the meaning of work is its exchange value, all the particular effects described in these books fall into place. Indeed, they become no more than what one would expect rational beings in a system ordered on such a basis to do. People who have not got work want it, or want whatever it is that they do re-defined as work. People who have work devote their energies to forcing up its unit exchange value and to strenuously resisting anything, including schemes to enhance the quality of work, which have an opposite tendency. Both Palm and Schrank[3] give us vivid accounts of that sort of refusal: "We don't make more just because it's team assembly."

Over and above that the sensible thing, as P. D. Anthony urges,[4] is to recognise the essential meaninglessness of work, not as a problem of alienation but as a fact of life, a reflection of the unimportance of work as anything but a means of buying whatever you *really* want: consumer goods, holidays, personal relationships, family or community responsibilities, status, hobbies, or as Harmon Industries International of Bolivar, Tennessee have it, EIT—Earned Idle Time. Once the relentless pursuit of functional efficiency in the organisation of work has reached this pitch the only logical response is the escape from work. That becomes the worker's proper counterpart to what has been done to work.

WHAT IS SENSIBLE to Anthony, as to a host of industrial-relations experts before him, is, however, in another perspective strongly urged by Alfred Sohn-Rethel,[5] only a far deeper form of alienation; an alienation in which owners, managers, workers and would-be workers no less than escapees from work are all victims of what Sohn-Rethel calls a "necessary false-conciousness", not at all mistaken within its own terms but rather the correct consciousness of a flawed social system. Faced with it the question one must ask is simply, "What must the existential reality of society be like to necessitate . . . such a form of consciousness?" The answer suggested by these studies is obviously pretty bleak.

Suggestive and indeed in principle correct as I think Sohn-Rethel's argument is, it is also, unfortunately like his book, a little too academic. Once everyone is, with whatever degree of enthusiasm or resignation, living in a world in which work is understood as no more than purchasing power the fact that work once was or might again be something different is whimsical unless some practical point of entry for a new view of work can be discerned. On the whole these books are not optimistic in that respect. Gallie for example severely discourages the view that the technology of high automation might precipitate new working-class militancy. Palm records, much to his own regret, the failure of attempts at worker participation. Anthony celebrates what he sees as the good sense of workers in declining to share the pathetic delusions of some managers about the possible meaningfulness of work. What we are offered, in compelling detail, is a world that has been conquered by the spirit of capitalism.

The distinctive views of work reported in these books are not at odds with one another but are simply different phases of the worker's participation in the spirit of capitalism in its contemporary guise. Taken together they affirm the surrender of work to the peculiar rationalism which is the hallmark of capitalist culture. Work is the price we pay for non-work; life is non-work; make sure you get full value for money. The logic is impeccable. Which is not to say that the lives in which it is embedded are not desperately impoverished. All the evidence of these studies suggests that they are—and that the whole pattern has an awful functionality. The flight from work guarantees the very trivialisation of work by which it is initially provoked; the refusal of responsibility validates the denial of responsibility to which it is a response. *Huis clos.*

ARE THERE WAYS out? Can meaningful work be reconstructed? Several possibilities are considered in these books. Sociologically, one of the most interesting is implicit in the set of reports edited by Rhona and Robert Rapoport, *Working Couples.*[6] The one thing everyone knows about the social effects of the industrial revolution is that it drove a wedge between the world of work and the world of the family. What is envisaged in this collection is that the two might be put back together again. At first sight the

[3] *Ten Thousand Working Days.* By ROBERT SCHRANK. M.I.T. Press, £8.75, $12.50.

[4] *The Ideology of Work.* By P. D. ANTHONY. Tavistock Publications, £8.00.

[5] *Intellectual and Manual Labour.* By ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL. Macmillan, £3.95.

[6] *Working Couples.* Edited by RHONA and ROBERT RAPOPORT. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £5.00, paper £2.50.

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findings seem quite encouraging. It is reported that in several different countries and in several different ways both the dual career family and the job-sharing family are becoming successful ways of life—from the point of view of the family, that is.

For the most part these studies record the overthrow of those obstacles to the bonding of spouses and the care of children which until quite recently were thought to stand immovably in the way of the working couple. Indeed, a majority of the couples studied seem to have been convinced that the adjustments they had had to make—the man doing much more child care for example—had greatly improved their family life. It was not just that difficulties had been overcome; a better type of marriage had been worked out. It would be nice to think that the enthusiasm of the men in these studies for their new way of life had something to do with the fact that for the first time they were doing work for use rather than for exchange, and had been lucky enough to stumble upon one of the few forms of pre-industrialised work still available and socially valued.

Unfortunately the Rapoports and their fellow authors do not make it clear whether that was the sense in which the husbands embraced domesticity. What they do make clear is that whatever these arrangements might do for marriage and the family they were having little impact on the world of exchange-value work. The real difficulties facing working couples are shown to lie not within the couple but in the demands and rigidities of organised work.

Job-sharing is especially revealing in this respect. Employing institutions seem quite unable to grasp the alternative meaning of work implicit in such a way of working and to insist instead on seeing both partners as something less than serious, "real" workers. The man becomes a woman in the eyes of the employer, not the woman a man. Much the same happens of course to husbands of dual career marriages who seek time off to fulfil domestic responsibilities. So it seems that the entry of women into work will not change the nature of work but in the end will intensify and extend its present character; women in their turn will discover the moral vacuity of work and fly from it to a real world of non-work, sport, politics, even the family. The logic of work as exchange-value is too deeply entrenched in our economies to be broken by invaders from the outer space of domesticity.

ACTUALLY the news is much worse than that. One of the distinctive ways in which working couples master their difficulties is by turning personal relationships into work. The caring professions, educationists, child-minders, social workers, nurses, counsellors, therapists of all kinds are called into being and given fields of need to which to minister. And the need justifies the means. The caring professions become, as Ivan Illich calls them,[7] disabling professions. They establish themselves by successfully asserting our incompetence. The price of being serviced by them is an admission of incapacity on the part of their clients. The loss of control that underpins the flight from work is now experienced in the home as well. The monthly check-up with the marriage guidance counsellor becomes a likely prospect.

As Illich puts it: "Man ceases to be recognisable as one of his kind when he can no longer shape his own needs by the more or less competent use of those tools that his culture provides." No doubt if he had thought about it he would have said the same about woman. One wretched, unintended but not really unpredictable consequence of recent changes in family life has been to latch the family, the whole world of private life indeed, on to the industrial need-machine as just such an area of incompetence.

Until quite recently—when Daniel Bell wrote a major essay on "Work and Its Discontents" in the late 1950s, for example—the image of society as a world divided into two distinct and more or less antithetical spheres, work and non-work, made good sense. It seemed plausible to argue that even though the processing of needs by industry and the market might have eliminated the possibility of meaningful, intrinsically valued work for almost everyone, the possibility remained for almost everyone to relate rationally to work as a means both to satisfy those needs for material goods generated by industry and the market and to satisfy more profound needs within the independent sphere of private life still under the individual's own control. In the last generation the credibility of the separation of those spheres has collapsed. The growth of the "service economy" and the "personal service society" is also the handing over of one more area of human activity, perhaps the last we have, to the need-machine. Private life is now reconstituted as somebody else's work; parenthood validated by psychiatric social workers; intimacy certified by Masters and Johnson; competent control replaced by trivialised work.

I think Illich is mistaken in seeing the caring/disabling professions as the central disorder of advanced industrial societies. But he is perhaps right in seeing them as the peculiar symptom of

[7] *The Right to Useful Employment*. By IVAN ILLICH. Marion Boyars, £3.95.

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disorder at this moment and possibly as indicating that the disease is now entering a terminal stage. But the disease itself is the social organisation of work. The new professions are merely its latest growth. Much of Illich's argument depends on taking the most grandiose claims of those whose work is care or knowledge at face value. But the claims seem to be inversely rather than directly related to reality. A mass of evidence suggests that what is really happening to the professions, old and new alike, is a loss of power and autonomy, not an advance. Their knowledge and expertise is subordinated to bureaucratic and political control. Their activity is more minutely specified and bounded—becoming, in fact, work rather than activity. They themselves adopt an increasingly instrumental, dissociated view of their work ("please don't call me at home"), abandon professional ethics in favour of collective bargaining, fight to inflate the exchange value of their labour, find themselves powerless to determine how their skills will be used—becoming, in fact, workers rather than professionals. Knowledge is not power. Behind the talk of professionalisation what is actually happening is a general proletarianisation. Private life may become the social worker's work, but the social worker is indeed a social *worker*.

The new professions have to be seen as, with the new working class, extensions of the logic of industrialism, not as radical departures from it. Alain Touraine believes that their sensitivity to knowledge and their understanding of the abuse of knowledge involved in their own incorporation into the working class might make them a new vanguard of radical energy, a nucleus of new revolutionary protest. Their own behaviour suggests rather that they have readily succumbed to the necessary false consciousness of contemporary work. ASTMS and BASW are indeed militant; but their militancy has nothing to do with social change. The new professions do cannibalise private life; but they do so because they extend an established world of work not because they are the centre of a new system of power.

Illich voices a despairing and misplaced romanticism: public life has been taken from us, let us at least fight for our private lives. But he himself has shown that private life cannot resist industrialism, cannot effectively withstand efforts to make it over as work. If the loss of human control of human activity which is the essence of industrial work is to be resisted at all it would seem that the counter-attack should be mounted centre-stage not in the wings, within industry not in the cottages, communes, bedrooms, Mexican villages where briefly secure bolt-holes have been found.

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WITHIN INDUSTRY three courses present themselves: participation, up-grading and control. Participation has an agreeable sound and is widely favoured by management. Unfortunately the workers have been there before and have learned that most proposals for worker participation like most job-enhancement schemes have more to do with productivity or speeding the line than with restoring competence to workers or giving them genuine responsibility. Kenneth Roberts' useful digest of British studies[8] is as convincing as it is depressing in that respect: "The overall logic of the economic system militates against fundamental improvements in the quality of working life . . . managements become interested in this problem only when the quest for output and profit has been pushed to such extremes that effort and morale sag and labour turnover, disputes and absenteeism increase." Palm observed the fraud at the root of most participation proposals and translated it into the terms of his own work:

> If my publisher should step into my study with an extremely expensive electric typewriter which I have not asked him for and tell me that it is high time to increase my productivity, if he should remove my own beloved typewriter and offer me the use of a new one, without cost, on condition that I take full responsibility for it and treat it as an infant in arms since the publishing house may otherwise suffer the most dreadful losses—if all this were to happen I am not at all sure that I should want the 'responsibility.' But this is exactly the type of pseudo-responsibility which is constantly offered to the workers. Responsibility without control. Responsibility without influence.

Or as the Volvo union representative interviewed by Schrank put it: "OK, but no more production."

The experience of up-grading has been much the same. Roberts' analysis is brutally clear on this question. Workers' conditions have improved in so far as workers have been able to seize or make opportunities to force up the price of their labour; but there is no sense in which up-grading of that sort changes the nature, meaning or experience of work. On the contrary it confirms it. On the one hand, "The management of work remains primarily instrumental; profitable turnover rather than humane experience is the overriding objective." And on the other, work itself is ever more starkly "the sale of labour

[8] *The Working Class*. By KENNETH ROBERTS. Longman, £3.50.

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power, little more, for money and little else." The system has perfected itself.

Control holds out more hope, but only just. Palm notes that there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the meaningfulness of work increases with the degree of influence and responsibility workers enjoy. And his book ends with a carefully argued case for a system of worker control based on teamwork in semi-autonomous departments and the abolition of low level management. But he has to recognise that this sort of reconstruction is not something many workers themselves want. How could it be since it runs against the grain of their necessary false consciousness, the logic of the industrial need-machine? Roberts emphasises the same point; a scaling-down of industry and a redistribution of control far-reaching enough to make workers competent to determine the use of their own tools could effect a revolution in work. But at present such ideas are more the projects of academics living off the wealth created in manufacturing industry than of those who support them: "The stark conclusion must be that few workers are interested in exercising control." Again, of course it must.

But despite the evidence Roberts assembles in favour of a hard-headed recognition of work as no more than an economic transaction I am inclined to cling to something closer to the possibly more naive views of Palm and Schrank. Unlike Illich they do not heroically refuse an outrageous fate. More modestly and more hopefully they reassert the possibility that human beings can be something more than the sort of workers and welfare clients industrialism seems to require. The real value of these books is that their authors have come close enough to the workers they write about to discover that despite the dehumanisation of work workers have not "gone home"; and that despite the industrialisation of private life by the disabling professions they have declined to become calculating zombies, refugee subsistence farmers or psychological derelicts. A sense of connectedness, a strong grasp of life persists in the voices these writers record. Palm offers us the Finnish metalworker Jaakko Stenius:

> "The base, the fact that . . . I *want* to work, I like to work! To work in manufacturing industry, to manufacture things, that is positive! Not guns or rubbishy plastic packaging—useful things . . . You see that when people are moved around today in Sweden, in Finland . . . they can always make a telephone call, a little contact, contact, that is important. I am part of that . . . the job is not degrading, it is the opposite! A lot of things should be different, a *lot* yes . . . I *am* a

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machine slave, I know it too in the sense that I don't decide much. Very little. The bosses decide more. The carrot bastard decides more. The machine often decides more too. I mean if you have the carrot system then you *get* workers who only chase money and money and never ask about anything else."

And Schrank gives us his childhood hero, Arturo Giovanetti:

"A tall man with a flaming bow tie who would sweep me up in the air and bounce me over his head, proclaiming, 'Is one of our new kind of man—a revolutionist, a free man, loving, and always a worker.' Then he would put me down and holding my shoulders, in a whispered voice as in a sort of confidence between two men, he would ask, 'You like da girls yet?' I would be embarrassed and say, 'No', and he would smile with his big face lit up close to mine, look me straight in the eyes and say, 'Little boy, you gotta da best ting coming. After da revolution, da women is da best of all.' "

Such men have stayed at work and stayed alive. Since there is no escape, that is just as well. They are not clamouring for workers' control. But they are claiming work as a human activity. And that is much the same thing.

Stability or Change?

On Education & Society—By JOHN EGGLESTON

IF SOCIOLOGY was the academic growth industry of the 1960s, sociology of education was its brand leader. It could hardly have been otherwise: two unassailable factors contrived to give the subject apparently unlimited prospects of growth. The first was its promise to solve the embarrassing social inequalities of the affluent '60s, in a painless, conscience-relaxing manner. Sociologists would identify the social causes of inequality, and the sociologists of education would go on to find ways in which education could alleviate them, or at least compensate for them. The eternal growth economy of the 1960s would, without difficulty, find effective ways to use these new waves of educated manpower. Converts flooded to the new, non-sacrificial faith.

But a second and equally potent force fed the engines of sociological expansion. The early lengthening of the courses for teacher training (from two-year certificates to four-year degrees in a decade) was followed by a vast expansion of numbers to serve the birth-rate bulge. What better component for these new courses and new students could there be than more sociology of education to further the understanding of the changing social realities of home, community and work, and thereby ensure more effective teaching in the new comprehensive and primary schools—schools that were themselves, in part, a consequence of the advocacy of the sociologists of education?

As we all know, the bubble burst early in the 1970s. The catalogue of events is familiar: the relative ineffectiveness of compensatory education programmes, burgeoning youth unemployment even among those in possession of degrees and other qualifications, the well publicised difficulties of some of the new comprehensive schools, the assertion by Christopher Jencks and others that "schooling doesn't matter" and that far more intractable issues determine inequality—all these doused the optimism of the sociology of education in the 1960s. And the ultimate *coup de grâce* has been the dramatic diminution of teacher training numbers as a consequence of falling birth rates throughout most Western countries. At a stroke the legions of students have been decimated.

Reappraisal has had spectacular effects on the confidence of the subject. The dominance of positivist approaches has faded to give way to a new set of "interpretative" orientations, inspired particularly by the phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists. Michael F. D. Young, in his seminal book *Knowledge and Control* (1971), argues that researchers in education, including sociologists, had taken educators' problems as given, and in their enquiries on these given problems—the achievement of working-class children, the content of the curriculum, the nature of attainment and success—had accepted the educators' definition of the situation with all its assumptions and interpretations unchallenged. Certainly early research in the determination of educational opportunity treated as unproblematic the concept of "what it is to be educated" or the nature of the education at which pupils fail.

Much of the new, interpretative, approach in the sociology of education rested upon the work of two phenomenologists, Peter L. Berger and

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Thomas Luckmann, who wrote, in 1971, an influential volume called *The Social Construction of Reality*. They suggested that the way in which reality is perceived in social situations is an artefact; a construction by all the participants of a social situation which, however permanent it appears, may be redefined and therefore changed. The ensuing surge of relativism was typified by writers such as William Labov with his strong advocacy of the acceptability of the use of non-standard English in the school. Such moves retained, for the "new" sociology of education, one important component of the old—a belief that social change was possible. Yet its very relativism, though a useful instrument for hammering the system, was a major impediment to the radical sociologists who espoused it because it was inimical to any kind of organised consensual change. Not surprisingly it gave way to a renascent positivism—though a positivism that is predominantly Marxist rather than liberal. In these new orientations education becomes identified as not so much an avenue of opportunity but rather an instrument of social control, whereby the requirements of the labour market and the class system are satisfied by the school, and particularly by its curriculum, methodologies and assessment procedures. Social change again becomes feasible—by changing the instruments of social control.

THIS DRAMATIC AND PAINFUL transition, with its myriad variations and compromises, can be seen clearly in the plethora of recent volumes on the sociology of education. Pride of place among these must go to *Power and Ideology in Education*,[1] a large and important collection of papers edited by Jerome Karabel and A. H. Halsey. In 1961 Halsey, along with Jean Floud and C. A. Anderson, produced one of the most influential texts in the sociology of education at that time—a reader entitled *Education, Economy and Society*. The objective of the new volume is similar—to survey and criticise "the present state of social, scientific knowledge in education." The changed title rather than the unchanged purpose is the key to the essential difference in the sociology of education in the period.

The most important part of Karabel and Halsey's volume is the Editorial Introduction—a long account that begins with a spirited defence of the achievements of the early positive functional-

[1] *Power and Ideology in Education*. Edited by JEROME KARABEL and A. H. HALSEY. Oxford University Press, £6.95.

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ism and the related and now more acceptable form of human capital theory. From here they move on to the kind of latter-day functionalism of James Coleman, Peter Blau and Otis Duncan, and Christopher Jencks. After expressing proper concern at the way in which, in such approaches, the choice of method appears to precede formulation of the problem, the editors discuss perceptively the emergent areas of conflict analysis in the sociology of education and then move briskly to the contemporary Marxist analyses, particularly emphasising the importance of the work of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis with its emphasis on correspondence theories—i.e. where schooling corresponds to the requirements of the socio-economic system.

Karabel and Halsey have little time for the interpretative sociology of education; in particular they object to what they see as its pretentiousness and its minimal empirical achievement. Referring to the main field work of one of the key figures of the movement, Aaron Cicourel, they write: "The most striking thing about the study . . . is its frequent banality", and they conclude: "it is hard to see how the interpretative approach has advanced understanding of a problem for which it seemed eminently apt—that of educability." Elsewhere they say:

> If sociologists cannot eradicate glowing inequalities in the real world, they can perhaps do away with them on the conceptual level by denying that they are, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, inequalities after all. What would seem to be racial and class differences in the distribution of knowledge are instead figments of a positivistic imagination.

The remaining 600 pages of the book are devoted to Social Structure and Selection, Human Capital and the Labour Market, Politics of Education, Cultural Reproduction and the Transmission of Knowledge, and Social Transformation and Educational Change, each section prefaced by a brief but useful introduction. Overall the range is as wide as the introductory essay: many of the great classics are there but there is also much new work and new translations, including a remarkably enduring piece by Durkheim which has not been previously available to English readers. Sophisticated analysts of Marxist theory like Martin Carnoy and Jorge Wertheim rub shoulders with intriguing empirical studies such as "Socialisation into apathy and political subordination."

YET FOR A CLEAR VIEW of modern neo-Marxist conflict theory in the sociology of education it is necessary to turn to three main sources. One is the work of Bowles and Gintis, where the emphasis is based upon "correspondence theory"—the correspondence between the socio-economic system and the school. The second is Antonio Gramsci and his concept of hegemony—the legitimacy of prevailing social order brought about by the unity of a particular set of political, social and economic forces that have so "saturated" society that it is seen to be a natural order and therefore unchallenged. The third—perhaps the most articulate and influential advocate of modern Marxist theory of education—is Pierre Bourdieu, who emphasises the cultural basis of cognitive procedures that bring about reproduction of society and culture through education, as the title of his recent book, written jointly with Jean-Claude Passeron, proclaims.[2] Ably translated, the work provides a valuable service in making available to English readers, for the first time, some of the more substantial and formative of Bourdieu's theorisations. At the heart of the volume is the concept of legitimacy—a device which according to Bourdieu and Passeron enables meanings, particularly the ruling ideas of the ruling classes, to be imposed without revealing the economic and social power which constitutes the real reason for their strength. Education is not only a process for transmitting these meanings but also for learning and internalising the legitimacy—thus ensuring the reproduction of the social system and its power system. Their argument is supported by many illustrations from the French education system—and particularly the content and selection arrangements of its cultural and professional programmes.

THE GALLIC ELEGANCE AND STYLE of Bourdieu and Passeron lead us, not uncharacteristically, to a conclusion that is inelegant and depressing—painful acquiescence or an even more painful revolutionary struggle. Fortunately there are more optimistic scenarios, one of which is provided by Harold Entwistle's *Class, Culture and Education*.[3] Like Bourdieu and Passeron, he is concerned with the key ingredients of class, culture, privilege and disadvantage, and he handles them with comparable skill, yet his conclusions are far removed from their Marxist version of élitism. Instead, he argues for a

[2] *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. By PIERRE BOURDIEU and JEAN-CLAUDE PASSERON. Translated by RICHARD NICE. Sage Publications, £9.00, $15.00; paper £3.50, $6.95.

[3] *Class, Culture and Education*. By HAROLD ENTWISTLE. Methuen, £6.50, paper £2.95.

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reappraisal of working-class culture that emphasises not the separatist excellence argued by sentimental radicalists but its close and formative integration with the central aspects of a common culture—notably the aspects of work and leisure. The book draws up an agenda for a common curriculum envisaging a far wider definition of what is counted as successful, prestigious and worth while. Though Entwistle's argument is incomplete, he holds out the prospects of choice now within the existing socio-economic structure rather than choice deferred until the structure is overcome.

This liberal "optimistic" sociology still finds support in many quarters. Raymond Giles, in *The West Indian Experience in British Schools*,[4] presents evidence from a range of London schools and suggests that, despite the multiplicity of ethnic cultures and the even greater multiplicity of educational responses to them in modern Britain, there exists a realistic goal of integration into a multi-cultural but essentially consensus society in which personal choice can be enhanced by educational strategies to eliminate social disadvantage.

P. W. Musgrave in *The Moral Curriculum*[5] addresses himself even more optimistically to the strategies whereby children may learn to make moral choices. He explores the processes whereby moral decisions are made and the values by which the children are guided. His analysis—based upon his own research, and in particular his examples of the way in which young people understand rules, responsibilities, privileges and punishments—suggests a system of independent human behaviour (which not only makes but creates fundamental areas of choice) that is difficult, to say the least, to reconcile fully with the "reproduction" of Bourdieu and Passeron or the "correspondence" of Bowles and Gintis.

ALONGSIDE THE CROSSFIRE and revisionism of the sociology of education, the basic textbook industry moves swiftly, rapidly updating and revising itself to avoid premature obsolescence. A typical series is Longman's Social Process Series and in one of its volumes Graham White writes on *Socialisation*[6]—the process whereby the newly born infant is translated into full adult membership of society. Written 20 years ago, such a volume would have presented an unambigu-

[4] *The West Indian Experience in British Schools*. By RAYMOND GILES. Heinemann Educational, £2.20.

[5] *The Moral Curriculum*. By P. W. MUSGRAVE. Methuen, £4.50, paper £2.20.

[6] *Socialisation*. By GRAHAM WHITE. Longman, £4.75, paper £2.50.

A THEORY OF SOCIAL ACTION

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Foreword by M. NATANSON

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Perimeters of Social Repair

edited by W. H. G. Armytage and John Peel

October/November 1978
x + 158pp., £8.80/$18.25
0.12.062750.7

This volume records the Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Symposium of the Eugenics Society, which was held to assess the impact of current programmes of social repair, or, in other words, those acts of professional intervention designed to remedy or alleviate the failure of natural social processes. This book presents the views of a wide variety of acknowledged experts, and avoids, by this diversity, any insistent personal view. It attempts to unravel the myths and dilemmas of social repair as a first step towards establishing better systems of education, health service and social organisation generally.

ASA Monograph 17

Sex and Age as Principles of Social Differentiation

edited by J. S. La Fontaine

October 1978, viii + 188pp.
£6.20/$12.75 0.12.433050.9

This book presents a collection of papers designed to focus attention on a neglected topic: the nature of ascriptive roles. Two of the most common ways of establishing social differentiation are by age and by sex, and although the two principles have usually been discussed separately, they are similar since each is a cultural transformation of a natural process of human physiology—ageing, and reproduction. Very often, too, the principles are found in conjunction, and the relationship between the sexes may depend on the existence of a ritualised distinction between mature and immature.

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ously positive view of how the individual, suitably rewarded, would have normally taken on a comformist, "well-adjusted" adult identity through the "agencies of socialisation"—home, school, work and community. These days the author finds it essential to devote much of his book to references to Marxist analyses of socialisation, such as:

> Schools form part of a socialising process attempting to ensure conformity to an ideology which serves to deflect attention from the reality of the exploitation practised by the dominant classes.

A problem faces the textbook writer. It is insufficient merely to present the individual aspects of the sociological debate to the student: they must be related to each other, and White, like many others, finds this difficult. At times he provides a good example of the obscurity of much modern sociological commentary:

> What is needed is that the school context, and the political and economic structure of society, should become the new areas for concern in considering the opportunities for socialisation made available for different groups of children.

At a rather different level, Bernard Curtis and Wolfe Mays have produced a collection of papers, *Phenomenology and Education*,[7] that attempts to develop the somewhat primitive liaison that already exists between phenomenology and education. Based on the 1976 conference of the British Society for Phenomenology and addressed primarily to philosophers of education, the volume contains two particularly useful essays on the development of thinking based upon the work of Piaget, by Neil Bolton and Wolfe Mays, which demonstrate Piaget's lack of attention to pre-reflective experience—an important issue for phenomenologists and non-phenomenologists alike. It is reassuring to find somewhere in the wide field of contemporary sociology of education such fruitful consequences of a fusion of perspectives.

BUT IT IS TO OTHER VOLUMES that we must look if we are to reach any kind of judgment of the sociology of education (or of the educational arrangements) that sociologists have helped to generate. Tim Devlin and Mary Warnock—a somewhat unlikely and certainly not wholly sociologically oriented combination—

[7] *Phenomenology and Education*. Edited by BERNARD CURTIS and WOLFE MAYS. Methuen, £6.95, paper £3.50.

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offer *What Must We Teach?*,[8] a brisk canter through the Great Debate and other excitements of recent years. They add a useful comparative perspective and then lead us to an intelligent, provocative yet by now predictable argument for a new curriculum, new examinations, new research and a new Schools Council. Their book displays a lingering faith that changes in the organisation of education alone can be effective—despite all the evidence, sociological and otherwise, of a quarter-of-a-century.

ROBIN BARROW in his *Radical Education*,[9] a "critique of free schooling and deschooling", pays particular attention to the ideas of writers such as Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, A. S. Neill and Everett Reimer; his skill in exposing absurdities, oversimplifications, romanticism and naivety will delight many readers. Not only does he subject radical education to a sound philosophical analysis but he offers a useful history of the development of radical thought. Perhaps most valuably, he offers us a profile of the radical educator that is readily applicable to the radical sociologist of education:

> The most serious problem facing the radicals however is the internal contradiction between their ideals (what they are seeking to bring about) and their proposals. To varying degrees they are politically minded: they want and hope to produce a more just, equal and democratic society. But by temperament they are individualists. Even in most congenial circumstances individualism does not rest easy with those ideals. The tension is exacerbated by the uncertainty of radicals as to whether they are opting out of the real world, proposing plans for changing it, or depicting an ideal pattern of education for a ideal world.
>
> The radicals have told us sharply and wisely that something needs doing: they have set before us some goals and indicated many shortcomings in the school system. They have suggested that our aim should be to bring up a generation of concerned and critical thinkers. The individual who first tells us precisely what is involved in being a concerned and critical thinker and how best we may produce them in the world as it is at the moment is the theorist whom the world awaits. It is sad and ironic that the radicals should have done more by

[8] *What Must We Teach?* By TIM DEVLIN and MARY WARNOCK. Maurice Temple Smith, £6.00, paper £2.75.

[9] *Radical Education.* By ROBIN BARROW. Martin Robertson, £7.95, paper £3.50.

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their style of argument to suspend critical thought in their readers than to help define the notion.

POSSIBLY THE FINAL VERDICT should go, as Robin Barrow half suggests, not to the philosopher but to the historian. Margaret Scotford Archer in her vast (and expensive) *Social Origins of Educational Systems*[10] sets out to deal with the fundamental issues of her theme —how educational systems develop and change, their characteristics, who receives education, what happens as a result. She is no stranger to the macro-perspective, as her previous volumes have demonstrated, and here, in a gargantuan and impressive socio-historical enterprise, she attempts to lay a theoretical framework on the century in which state education systems have developed and operated. In a complex and elaborate analysis, Scotford Archer bases her theories on the underlying concept of goals. Education changes "because new educational goals are pursued by those who have the power to modify previous practices." The Pareto orientations—élites and much else—so evident in her previous work are still clearly visible in this volume. But she makes a determined effort to go beyond Pareto and the over-simplifications to which his work gives rise to develop a new macro-sociological perspective, built upon action and structural approaches—a perspective employing "explanatory emergence together with descriptive individualism." For Scotford Archer the advantages of such a perspective include:

> The capacity to distinguish conflictual interaction likely to produce change from that which simply reflects group antagonisms . . .

and

> the capacity to distinguish those relations between systems parts which make for change from those which make for stability, rather than assuming an inter-relatedness and equilibrium in which every element influences every other and all things work together for adaptation.

These excerpts from Scotford Archer's warming-up exercises indicate the rigours ahead for the reader. Yet in a text that is over-long, over-complex, and lacking in editorial forging there are many rewarding items—such as the succinct account of the development of Labour Party ideas on education in the 20th century. Despite its complexity and its length, the book ends in an unexpectedly simple analysis—there are centralised and decentralised systems of education that "continue to exert different structural influences on educational interaction in their respective countries, despite the fact that some convergence has taken place between them."

That said, she returns us promptly to something that sounds very like Pareto:

> there is nothing to stop a governing élite from passing an act which would transform a centralised system into a decentralised one, hence destroying the conditional influences which have reproduced the "stop-go" pattern of change over time and preserved structuration around a "leading part." In reality, however, structures distribute vested interests in their maintenance and it is the fact that groups do defend these which makes patterns of interaction and change durable in the long run.

After all this, the final verdict is one of stability rather than of change: "The differences between the centralised and the decentralised systems of education may ultimately give way, but not yet, and not without tremendous resistance from those who benefit from these two different types of educational control."

IT IS CLEAR that, despite Margaret Scotford Archer's immense industry, we still lack a comprehensive, theoretical explanation of the complex relationships between schooling, economy and social structure. Unless and until it arrives we must make do, thankfully, with the lively narrative of events supplied by Karabel and Halsey, providing as it does a scenario that allows us to make sense of the actors and the plots. It is a scenario that allows the next acts in the play to remain unknown and unpredictable —this preserving the excitement intact. But even at the interval we can see that the Marxist legions, seemingly so confident in the first half, face major challenge in the next.

[10] *Social Origins of Educational Systems*. By MARGARET SCOTFORD ARCHER. Sage Publications, £20.00, US publication Spring 1979.

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Opening Questions

Does "Social Science" Exist?—By JULIUS GOULD

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES—not just sociology—often proclaim themselves in the grip of endemic crisis. In our self-conscious age, they are mirrors to the Protean shapes which social arrangements assume—and those arrangements are at once both historically rooted and open to transformation. For nearly 200 years now, the political and social worlds have been marked (some backward-looking persons would say disfigured) by such transformations. Sociology itself had its origin in the mixture of messianism and analysis with which Auguste Comte sought to map those changes. Since his time—and in different ways and speeds in different countries—sociology has become "professionalised" and has sought to weld together both its speculative and its empirical components.

It is an unfinished, untidy business. Often its leading exponents seem to have worked out simply a prologue to social enquiry: to have devoted themselves (as, for example, Talcott Parsons has done for almost 50 years) to devising a sociological "frame of reference", a near-universal catch-all in which the richness of social life can be interpreted, in which the uniformities and the diversities are put into an intelligible shape.

Even the most heroic and long-sustained of such endeavours remain unfinished. Their value is not in the answers they give but in the questions they raise. For there is an educational and a social purpose in the raising of questions—always provided that the answers—often conflicting answers—are not used as mind-closers or thought-stoppers. There is much that can be gained by the pursuit of sociology's main technique (that of the comparative method), seeking to show how and why different social devices, and beliefs about those devices, have come into being—what the relations are between structures and beliefs, how the structures and the beliefs change, and so on. . . . To shed light—even a half-light—on these matters is a useful and honourable intellectual activity. I do not believe that this can be done without a deep immersion in, for example, history and literature—those ancient forms of self-consciousness in which analysis and speculation are also indissolubly welded. Nor should we be rigid about the more narrowly "social science" *methods* needed in order to understand and/or explain a social process. Those who have preached a "hard" scientific objectivity have, in their turn, provoked a tedious and muddled subjectivism. Too much time, greatly to the disgust of the bystanders, can be spent on asking how we know what we know and how far we offer "theory" in one sense or other of the word.

FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE social scientists who, through their different merits, do not disgust the bystanders—and can even instruct (and improve) their colleagues. Professor David Martin is one such scholar.

His continuing work on religious life is sociology in its most seminal sense. His new book[1] uses a vast range of published and unpublished materials so as to set up a typology of religious forms in Europe (East and West) and in the United States—the aim being to indicate a "socio-logic" of the underlying forces behind the process of secularisation.

> To state a general theory is not to announce some dogma about the way things are going or about irreversible trends. It simply says that in circumstance *X* this or that development *Y* tends to occur, or more broadly that in the complex of historical circumstances *a*, *b*, *c*, a development *p*, *q*, *r* tends to occur . . . always allowing, of course, for adaptations on the part of those who have grasped more or less precisely this development and the best manner of either nullifying it or canalising it.

Clearly, the interplay between religious organisations and national development is a theme of exceptional importance—and the ways in which different economic and political settings promote or retard secularisation in the Christian world are, in good measure, the story of the last four centuries.

Many of those who speak of "Europe" do not often recognise the variety of social forms that make up the European reality—and those social forms, not least the religious and secular

[1] *A General Theory of Secularization*. By DAVID MARTIN. Blackwell, £10.

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political parties, are the sediment of religious history as much as of economic struggles or dynastic battles. (Even the British Labour Party has one root in English non-conformity—and the Church of England, in its time, was regarded in some quarters as the Conservative Party at prayer. . . .) David Martin categorises these phenomena—and the religious (and secular) supports for the American polity: he has also much of interest to say on religion under Communism and the strange mutations of religious-political life in Latin American contexts.

The general reader of this general theory will be struck by two things. Martin's often remorseless rotation of categories may go well beyond his ears—much of the typology arises out of the debate with his fellow specialists that Martin originated, 13 years ago, when he wrote, piquantly, about "eliminating the concept of secularisation." But the clarity of the prose makes the material, with all the contrasts and the paradoxes, highly accessible to the non-specialist. Moreover, there is no pretence of Procrustean finality in this book—no manic drive to encapsulate the universe. To quote Martin again:

the attempt at theory is not rendered useless by the fact that the scope of explanation is limited or some things left unexplained. What is needed is some indication of the crucial nexus of relevant factors and some hint as to their likely relationship.

DR KRISHAN KUMAR'S *Prophecy and Progress*[2] makes a good companion to Martin's book. He has given himself the most majestic of themes—"the sociology of industrial and post-industrial society"—and he focuses on the same relationalising impulses that have induced secularisation in urbanised and technologically "progressive" societies.

There is now a vast literature, carefully digested and criticised by Kumar, on the contours of industrialism, the changing shape of occupational structures, the likelihood of a shift to a post-industrial, knowledge-based society, and the possible convergence of all industrial societies to a common, not just comparable, type. Kumar casts a sceptical eye on most of those theories: and he can be quite censorious about those that offend him most. No doubt there was some overselling of the post-industrial society as a general future for industrial man: much of what was said about the knowledge-based society of the

[2] *Prophecy and Progress*. By KRISHAN KUMAR. Allen Lane, £7.95; Penguin, £1.50.

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future clearly derived from the scientific and educational boom of the 1960s. And the quite separate idea that industrial societies, despite their diverse cultures, would "converge" as the result of technological or managerial imperatives brought the whole idea of social imperatives into disrepute.

What has happened to the industrial world since 1973 has also put the idea of progress (rationally defined rather than prophetically proclaimed) under a further cloud. A mere six years ago it was possible to "believe" in growth, to claim that "on and on, and up and up" was a plausible scenario both in economic and scientific affairs. Now we are not so sure. Some, like Kumar, are attracted by the thought that "small is beautiful": and this raises for them the issue of a really alternative post-industrial future. Kumar is right to stress the truism—or maxim—of social discontinuity—that the future may constitute a break with the past rather than its logical extension. Yet we cannot, in the nature of the case, be certain.

I remain of the view that growth can ameliorate social misery and, to mix a metaphor, draw the teeth out of social tension: I regard the economic power of the "powerless" less-developed countries that supply us with raw materials as a major, perhaps uncontrollable, source of inflation and instability in the developed societies: and I shudder at the way the retreat from growth has undermined yet further the fragile self-confidence of Western man and woman. When and if growth resumes (so as to reduce, not eliminate, scarcities) the hints and messages of the '60s will warrant fresh attention: and Kumar's book will be an invaluable, if not always intended, guide.

NO ONE SHOULD BE DECEIVED by the simple title of Norbert Elias' ingenious book, *What is Sociology?*[3] Since he came to Britain from Germany in the 1930s, he has brooded, written and taught on the essence of sociology—and he has exercised a remarkable influence as a teacher.

His book is *multum in parvo*. At one level, it is a lucid formulation of the social "games" that people play—and of how such "games" can be understood not in terms of an abstract individualism but in terms of the rules which limit or enhance one group's capacity to impose its will, or preferences, upon another. This didactic model, as Elias calls it, gives "material" interests priority over "ideal" interests. But—and in this

[3] *What Is Sociology?* by NORBERT ELIAS. Blackwell, £8.50.

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he is closer to Weber than to the sanitised sociological Marx—he does not pre-empt the answers to the questions that preoccupy us and which, of course, post-date the classical writers.

Secondly, and quite rightly, Elias does not seek to abstract from politics—the game that interests him relates to the power differential between rulers and ruled and between various social strata. But this concern is presented in a rational, matter-of-fact way. There is none of the ranting obsession with power that the self-accredited radical sociologists display—an obsession that comes naturally to them but into which they were assisted by the apparent neglect of the theme in the '50s and '60s, by "conservative" or liberal writers.

On a third level, Elias is concerned to tell us what sociology is for:

> . . . the task of sociological research is to make these blind, uncontrolled processes more accessible to human understanding by explaining them and to enable people to orientate themselves within the interwoven social web—which, though created by their own needs and actions, is still opaque to them—and so better to control it.

This is an interesting passage—on several counts. It shows a cautious optimism about human rationality—entirely consistent with the author's refined blend of German and French social thought: but there is nothing technocratic about this position. Matters, please note, are to become "more accessible to human understanding", not completely transparent to even the most casual or semi-literate observer. It is also written in a conventional sociological style—using the language of "webs" and "orientations" that other writers have, so long and so cheerfully, played to a living death! I am struck by this—for elsewhere in the book Elias rightly comments that our sociological vocabulary is inadequate. One of the purposes of "didactic models" is to fill the gaps—not to generate neologisms for their own sake but new perspectives for a new and changeful era. Elias recognises that this cultural innovation is a long haul, one which, in a way, has hardly begun.

Not that Elias is blind to social change. On the contrary. For on a third plane he shows his attachment to the classical writers by praising their concern with "structured social change" (another cliché which Elias finds unavoidable) in the course of social development. What patterns of human activity are structured—how far they are patterns of conflict or of cooperation and in what mix—is, as he recognises, a key sociological problem; and he is right to say that there are too

THE SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW

Articles to be published early in 1979 (volume 27) include:

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few studies of "the structural properties of social development." Perhaps this is because there are more difficulties to the notion of social development than he allows for. "Modernisation" studies, for example, do not in Elias' book get the attention[4] (largely unfavourable) that they merit—though their failures would confirm some of his judgments.

PAUL HALMOS was another scholar who fled from European tyrannies and made his home in England. He did not live to see the publication of *The Personal and the Political*,[5] but in this book he has left a testament that combines wide-ranging analysis with a sustained moral urgency. Trends within social work education may not, *prima facie*, seem the most exciting of topics—but Professor Halmos' account of those trends is informed by a deep sensitivity to wider currents of social thought. He offers a counterpoint on the contrasts and linkages between the "personalist" and the "political" approaches to individual and social "problems." In an earlier work, *The Faith of the Counsellors* (1965), he had charted the postwar shift to such a "personal" approach and the intellectual rationales that were to influence the growing army of "personal service counsellors." Defective and inadequate as much advanced personalist thought was in the 1950s, it had (and has) the merit of stressing "the reductive working through of what is presented by the client and the establishment of a rapport comprising the core conditions of empathy, warmth and genuineness."

It is true, as Halmos often mordantly insists, that this approach developed in an age of real, if temporary, affluence and that it had links with the contentious theme of the end of ideology. But today, when ideology has resurfaced, its exponents with different degrees of crudeness and malevolence seek to impose a "radical" political stance. A new generation—out of tune with the morally sober political disillusion of the 1950s—has come into its inheritance. In arguments over community action, reverberating through training schools of social work, a radical political role is pushed into focus—not to work in tandem with the pursuit of casework, not simply to purge "individualised" casework of its grosser imperfections, but to create a new version of "agit-

[4] As they do, for example, in the excellent accounts by A. D. Smith in his *Social Change* (Longman's, 1977) and his earlier *The Concept of Social Change* (Routledge, 1973).

[5] *The Personal and the Political*. By PAUL HALMOS. Hutchinson, £5.95, paper £2.95.

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prop"—one which demands a fusion of the political and the service role in the fostering of a sustained hostility to capitalist and liberal institutions. When this ideology is allied to corporate union action in the proliferating public bureaucracies of our age, it becomes a force to be reckoned with, and Halmos' book is one of the most informed guides I know to these strains and tendencies.

Two of his concerns are of the profoundest moral and cultural importance. Firstly, concern with individual cases should not be displaced by political zeal—short-term alleviation of personal stress cannot await the arrival of a socialist, or any other, millennium. Those who are paid to do an urgent personalist job may be, if they desire, revolutionaries (or reactionaries) in their spare time; their political and their occupational roles may engender conflicting loyalties and challenges: but the roles *are* distinct and separate. Mass society—guided by huge self-seeking bureaucracies—can oppress, disturb, and debase the individual. It would be a supreme irony if through a mish-mash doctrine of social "liberation", the individual is told, in effect, to put up with his or her misfortunes until the new revolutionary hour has struck.

Secondly, those who preach such a doctrine ignore the importance of the tension between opposites—not just that between the personal and the political, but between commitment and objectivity, between thought and action.

SOCIAL THOUGHT in the '40s and '50s may have been sterile and jejune. But there remained scope for debate about these tensions—and, indeed, from that debate (reinforced by actual political and social events) the radical challenge in time emerged. But it would be grotesque to flit from one objectionable sterility to another—through the dogmatic proclamation of an overriding political purpose and the suffusion of all roles by a taken-for-granted politics. This, among other things, is a disservice to serious sociology—which has always stressed the richness of polarities and the difficulty of transcending them by what Schumpeter once called "the glamour of fundamental truth." Of course, there were sociologists—not least Auguste Comte—who veered (and sometimes collapsed) into a "transcendent" position. But their internal dialogue and their dialogue (often posthumous) with the empiricists is itself a cultural phenomenon—and to suppress it would not be a service either to education or to society.

"Tokenism"

Women as Social Animals—By DONALD MACRAE

"TOKENISM" is, I think, the only word in the English political vocabulary to have come from West Africa. Certainly "tokenism" was on everyone's lips on the Gold Coast in the months before that state was metamorphosed into Ghana in the Spring of 1957. Both Nkrumah and Busia were accused of this crime and both were, covertly, praised for the realism embodied in it. As a sociologist I have been guilty of tokenism for a very long time. I would tell my students with gravity and conviction—both perfectly sincere—that our accounts of social phenomena were gravely lacking in that they excluded so much of humankind from consideration at all and excluded other categories of humanity from a more than partial appraisal.

Take social class, I would say, and you will find that most people are involved only sometimes in the business of stratification and then only with a high probability during certain periods of their lives. Infants, the sick, the mad, the aged may all be affected by the class arrangements of a given society, but they are not class-conscious nor class-engaged to any great extent. Women, I would say, warming to my theme, are much less involved in class than we men, nor do they constitute a class as such. They are, because more free-floating, less class-identifiable, more upwardly socially mobile than men. Their participation in the labour market save in certain areas and trades is less close than that of men. Domesticity is in some ways a refuge from class. And so on. . . .

All good stuff, all true, but what followed was tokenism. We ought, I would say, lighting my (phallic?) cigar or taking another sip of water from my carafe beside the lectern, take such matters seriously in our studies and researches. I would then go and do something else.

NOW OUR STUDIES of society are transformed and my tokenism revealed. True I have tried to

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encourage the study of what is called "sex and gender" roles in my department—I think the title unfortunate, but that is how the jargon goes. But until now I have not read the enormous literature that has sprung from women's liberation, even though much of it is genuinely sociological, except in a random and cursory way. Now the Editors of ENCOUNTER have landed me with several books, all recent and all bearing in some way on this question of women as social animals in a society where in many ways the male animals have been and in many still are dominant.

Some of these books are accurately described by their titles. I have read them and I can commend them but I do not propose to say much about them. For example *Sexism and the Law: A Study of Male Beliefs and Judicial Bias* by Albie Sachs and Joan Hoff Wilson[1] is what it says. I must suppose it is accurate, for although I know something of family law in England and the United States, I am not a lawyer and cannot fully judge. I am not surprised that the law is flawed and contains illogicalities. I know that legal reform rarely arises from within the legal profession—and I would be worried were this not true. I know that the law is an imperfect defender of persons, alas, but that is not to attack its existence. I am fascinated by so clear a demonstration that "sexism" has on the whole been part of the unexamined ideology of the courts. I found this a useful book.

NORBERT C. SOLDON'S *Women in British Trade Unions, 1874–1976*[2] is again what it says, and a fine example of an American scholar writing on an English theme. It is that very necessary and difficult thing, an accurate chronology and narrative. Its conclusion that the role of women has been small and marginal and will remain so in the unions unless there is what used to be called a "raised consciousness" is true. His heroines like Mary MacArthur are not very vivid, but perhaps they are too little documented as people for more to be achieved. But I think he could have made more of his set-pieces like the match-girls' strike against Bryant and May. But this is a good, clear book, thick with facts. We cannot get either our history or sociology right without works of this kind and quality which kindle no flame but provide light.

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[1] *Sexism and the Law: A Study of Male Beliefs and Judicial Bias in Britain and the United States.* By ALBIE SACHS and JOAN HOFF WILSON. Martin Robertson, £8.95, paper £3.95.

[2] *Women in British Trade Unions, 1874–1976.* By NORBERT C. SOLDON. Gill and Macmillan, £12.

SOCIOLOGY BOOKS

SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY AND LEGAL PHENOMENA
by Wilkinson and Grace
Clive Grace — B.Soc. Sci. (B'ham), M.A. (Cal.)
Philip Wilkinson — LL.B (Lon), Dip.Crim. (Cambridge), M.Sc (Sociology) (LSE)
The authors believe that the critical problem for the sociology of law is to escape from the prevailing emphasis on normative analysis and conceptions. By stressing the sociological core of social action, they attempt to show the limitations for normative sociology and put forward an alternative — the study of social action as it relates to legal activities, by means furnished by interpretative sociological approaches. This attempt at re-direction has been accomplished within the framework of a general textbook on the subject. This is achieved through a critical review of studies already undertaken.
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DAMNATION AND DEVIANCE: THE PROTESTANT ETHIC AND THE SPIRIT OF FAILURE
by M. Rotenberg — *(The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*
The Calvinist idea that man is predestined to be among the elect or the damned has profoundly influenced not only our views of criminals and deviants but also the theoretical basis of correctional methods and psychotherapeutic techniques, argues Dr. Rotenberg. He maintains that the "Protestant bias" of Western behavioural sciences has led to a pessimistic anti-therapeutic attitude toward deviance and proposes an alternative model, based on Hasidic notions of redemption, for an optimistic, future-orientated social therapy.
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ACTION THEORY AND THE HUMAN CONDITION
by Talcott Parsons — *(Professor Emeritus — Harvard University)*
This collection documents, more fully than ever before, the relations between the social system and Parsons general system of action in the broader setting of the "Human Condition". Part I deals with Health and Illness, II with Higher Education, and III with Religion.
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MARTIN ROBERTSON

BARBARIANS, GENTLEMEN AND PLAYERS: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football
E. G. Dunning, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Leicester, and *K. G. Sheard*, Lecturer in Sociology, Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology.

Rugby football is descended from the winter "folk games" which were a deeply rooted tradition in pre-industrial Britain. This book studies the evolution of Rugby football from its violent origins to the game in its modern "Union" and "League" forms. The development of Rugby is related to changes in the wider structure of British Society.

Spring 1979 £8.95 (hardback)

WORLD FUTURES: The Great Debate
Edited by *Christopher Freeman*, Director, and *Marie Jahoda*, Senior Research Consultant, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex.

Against the background of the last decade's worldwide concern with the future of mankind, this book examines four critical issues—food, energy, non-renewable resources and technology—in the light of economic and social theory.

"*World Futures* is a first-class research monograph. . . ."
Times Higher Education Supplement.

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CENSORSHIP AND OBSCENITY
Edited by *Rajeev Dhavan*, Lecturer in Law, Brunel University, Uxbridge, and *Christie Davies*, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, University of Reading, with a Foreword by John Trevelyan.

Lawyers, psychologists and sociologists examine the vital questions—who censors and why? How do the laws for the censorship of obscenity work? What are the consequences of censoring and not censoring obscenity?

"The book will be found most stimulating and should prompt its readers to reach clearer views of their own on this vexing topic." *The Law Society's Gazette.*

June 1978 £7.95 (hardback)

THE HIDDEN ECONOMY
Stuart Henry, Sociologist, Outer Circle Policy Unit, London.
This is a book about everyday crimes such as illegal pilfering, fiddling and trading of goods and services that go on among ordinary people working in factories, shops, hospitals, schools and offices.
". . . a most articulate and intelligent contribution to an important area of criminology . . . excellent value . . ."
Laurie Taylor, New Society.

June 1978 £7.95 (hardback)

SEXISM AND THE LAW: A Study of Male Beliefs and Judicial Bias in Britain and the United States
Albie Sachs, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Southampton, and *Joan Hoff Wilson*, Professor of History, Arizona State University, USA.

This study documents for the first time the judicial response to attempts by feminists to use the courts to secure the right to vote, sit on councils and enter the legal and medical professions. It uses the rationalisation of male monopoly of public life offered by the judges in the so-called person's cases as the basis for a general exploration of male beliefs and practices up to the present day.

September 1978 £3.95 (paperback) and £8.95 (hardback)

These books can be obtained from your local bookseller or, in case of difficulty, from
Martin Robertson & Co. Ltd., 108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JF

Publishers specialising in the social sciences

History on a grander scale is provided by one of the two books I have most enjoyed in this compulsory course of education. Richard Stites' *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia*[3] is a magnificent read in the way that so much writing on Russian history tends to be. Did the great novelists, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and above all Turgenev, and Chekhov in his plays and tales invent the Russians? The more one learns the more likely it seems. This long book (464 pages) sweeps one forward through so much sad comedy, real tragedy and vain fervour that one is left exhausted. Stites himself refers to his tale as "opulent and flamboyant history." He is quite right, and his is not just the book in which to find out the roles and passions of Figner, Kollontai, Zetkin or Zhenotdel—all to me terrifying—but one to be questioned.

The "woman question"—and who invented that odd phrase; was it Bebel?—was more important in Russia than in Italy or Germany and far more so than in Britain or the France of the Third Republic. But we do not know why, though some answers arise here in a partial form. Again, though Stites holds the usage to be illegitimate, what is the explanation of Bolshevik puritanism and contempt for sex if not for women? The answer can only be found, I suspect, when we study and understand the social and economic origins of Stalinism as thoroughly as we have explored them in their political and psychological (or biographical) forms. A splendid, frightening and depressing book, very well-written and with photographs that are themselves almost a narrative: I would have wished to have written on it separately and at length.

IN A SENSE these are the easiest of the books before me to introduce and briefly describe and assess. With the others we plunge into a sea whose currents, composition and soundings are barely understood. Wherever else society is to be found it is certainly in people's heads. To use one example that has nothing to do with sex and gender, consider the question of social and political cynicism. Suppose it to be true that every East European party member is a cynic—a very large assumption—it is still important both that what they are cynical about is Communist reality and that this thought-world in which their cynicism lives is that of Marxism. The categories of reality in which they act and discourse are Marxist, their very perceptions, then, are established by Marxist lenses. No one lives without some lenses but, alas, it is very hard to

[3] *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia.* By RICHARD STITES. Princeton University Press, $37.50, £25.10, paper $12.50, £8.40.

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know the nature and effects of those we wear and there is a kind of infinite regress built into all our attempts at such knowledge.

This is particularly true when we come to the fundamental categories of being social. One of these is gender. Perhaps because English is so neutral in ascribing gender it is particularly hard for us to realise how pervasive a category of the understanding it is and how it enters our thought and behaviour. A comparative of cross-cultural variation, Martin King Whyte's *The Status of Women in Preindustrial Societies*,[4] might help Ninety-three societies are studied. Some are tiny and poor, others are large and rich and even include Rome itself. The methodology is classical and exemplary and a revival of what is most necessary to modern social science. The conclusions are that male dominance was not ever universal but was usual and therefore cannot arise from any one single cause, not even the facts of anatomy, physiology, gestation and lactation. Indeed cross-culturally there is no one *status* of being female. On the whole being matrilineal and matrilocal is good for women's status and private property—a slippery concept—is institutionally rather bad. . . . No one social factor is crucially determinant of the facts and no one factor, therefore, can crucially affect an improvement in these facts—assuming that in these matters equalities are good, and I most certainly believe that at least.

WHEN WE GO FURTHER we enter the world of women's lib. The books are worse printed, the tone aggressive and polemical. These are not criticisms in any necessary sense, but they are true. Freud and Marx are called on and also condemned as chauvinists for masculinity. Felt wrongs are exposed; they are also sometimes confused with the general consequence of being human: sin, ignorance, stupidity, alienation, none of which can be avoided by female or male. Yet not all these wrongs are of this common kind; many are real, specific, avoidable in the interests of both men and women, and to protest is to be neither whore nor witch. What is lacking is both research of a humdrum sociological kind and fundamental thought. Marx doesn't help, but falsifies: women are not a class, but something more important. Gender is as fundamental a category of socialised perception (and there is no other) as space, time, causality, etc. Three volumes of essays[5] illustrate my points and are worth reference. They are polemic and diagnostic, but not more except when they are positivistic and give facts on roles and experiences—hospitalisation, rape, stigmatisation, discrimination—or on the histories of feminism and domination, and then they become informative as well as expressive. It is right that humankind should protest and not just dwell in quiet desperation.

Alas, though; tokenism remains, and indeed is added to. Being female is being attended to by social science, but what about being male? I understand that the strategies by which many of the categories in terms of which society is possible may be explored. Gender baffles me, and I can find no programme for its study and explication. Its manifestations are about us and in us and can be so documented and further exposed. Its foundations escaped even Durkheim and his heirs in France and Britain and there is no great and greatly to be criticised classic on *The Elementary Forms of Sex and Gender* to lay beside *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Lévi-Strauss in his world of binary oppositions and their transformations ought to help, but the very attempt of structuralism to go below and beneath the larger facts of social structure and social institutions evades the issues. "Male and female" is more like "left and right" than like "raw and cooked" or "honey and ashes." So what can one do other than be a tokenist and hope that others will do better now that attention to this matter is unavoidable.

About one thing I am certain. Explanations based on biology, on Freudianism, and on Marxism have all been thoroughly attempted. These investments have not paid off. On the other hand empiricism, scholarly history, critical description at least make evident the nature of our ignorance, and the human importance of taking all humanity seriously. Was sociology, was history, ever about anything else? Are we not fortunate to live in an age where the extension of these subjects is so rapid and so real? That is not a fashionable conclusion. This reading encourages me to it.

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[4] *The Status of Women in Preindustrial Societies*. By Martin King Whyte. Princeton University Press, $15, £10.10.

[5] *Tearing the Veil: Essays on Feminity*. By SUSAN LIPSHITZ. £2.95. *The Sex-Role System: Psychological and Social Perspectives*. By JANE CHETWYND and OONAGH HARTRETT. £2.95. *Women, Sexuality and Social Control*. By CAROL SMART and BARRY SMART, eds. All Routledge.

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The Fantasy of Marxism

Some Concluding Remarks—By LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI

MARXISM has been the greatest fantasy of our century.

It was a dream offering the prospect of a society of perfect unity, in which all human aspirations would be fulfilled and all values reconciled. It took over Hegel's theory of the "contradictions of progress", but also the liberal-evolutionist belief that "in the last resort" the course of history was inevitably for the better, and that man's increasing command over nature would, after an interval, be matched by increasing freedom. It owed much of its success to the combination of Messianic fantasies with a specific and genuine social cause, the struggle of the European working class against poverty and exploitation. This combination was expressed in a coherent doctrine with the absurd name (derived from Proudhon) of "scientific socialism"—absurd because the means of attaining an end may be scientific, but not the choice of the end itself.

The name, however, reflected more than the mere cult of science which Marx shared with the rest of his generation. It expressed the belief that human knowledge and human practice, directed by the will, must ultimately coincide and become inseparable in a perfect unity: so that the choice of ends would indeed become identical with the cognitive and practical means of attaining them. The natural consequence of this confusion was the idea that the success of a particular social movement was a proof that it was scientifically "true", or, in effect, that whoever proved to be stronger must have "science" on his side. This idea is largely responsible for all the anti-scientific and anti-intellectual features of Marxism in its particular guise as the ideology of Communism.

TO SAY THAT Marxism is a fantasy does not mean that it is nothing else. Marxism as an interpretation of past history must be distinguished from Marxism as a political ideology. No reasonable person would deny that the doctrine of historical materialism has been a valuable addition to our intellectual equipment and has enriched our understanding of the past.

True, in a strict form the doctrine is nonsense and in a loose form it is a commonplace; but, if it has become a commonplace, this is largely thanks to Marx's originality. Moreover, if Marxism has led towards a better understanding of the economics and civilisation of past ages, this is no doubt connected with the fact that Marx at times enunciated his theory in extreme, dogmatic, and unacceptable forms. If his views had been hedged round with all the restrictions and reservations that are usual in rational thought, they would have had less influence and might have gone unnoticed altogether, As it was, and as often happens with humanistic theories, the element of absurdity was effective in transmitting their rational content.

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI *has just completed a monumental three-volume history of Marxism, published by Oxford University Press; the above article represents the "Epilogue."*

Leszek Kolakowski was dismissed from his Chair of Philosophy at Warsaw University in 1968, during a wave of cultural and academic repression.

Among his recent contributions to ENCOUNTER *are: "How to be a Liberal-Conservative Socialist" (October 1978), "My Correct Views on Everything" (April 1975) and "Can the Devil be Saved?" (July 1974).*

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From this point of view the role of Marxism may be compared to that of psychoanalysis or behaviourism in the social sciences. By expressing their theories in extreme forms, Freud and Watson succeeded in bringing real problems to general notice and opening up valuable fields of exploration. This they could probably not have done if they had qualified their views with scrupulous reservations and so deprived them of clear-cut outlines and polemical force. The sociological approach to the study of civilisation was expounded by writers before Marx, such as Vico, Herder, and Montesquieu, or contemporary but independent of him, such as Michelet, Renan, and Taine. But none of these expressed his ideas in the extreme, one-sided, dogmatic form which constituted the strength of Marxism.

As a result, Marx's intellectual legacy underwent something of the same fate as Freud's was to do. Orthodox believers still exist, but are negligible as a cultural force, while the contribution of Marxism to humanistic knowledge, especially the historical sciences, has become a general underlying theme, no longer connected with any "system" purporting to explain everything.

One need not nowadays consider oneself or be considered a Marxist in order, for instance, to study the history of literature or painting in the light of the social conflicts of a given period; and one may do so without believing that the whole of human history is the history of class conflict, or that different aspects of civilisation have no history of their own because "true" history is the history of technology and "production relations", because the "superstructure" grows out of the "base", and so forth.

To recognise, within limits, the validity of historical materialism is not tantamount to acknowledging the truth of Marxism.

This is so because, among other reasons, it was a fundamental doctrine of Marxism from the outset that the meaning of a historical process can be grasped only if the past is interpreted in the light of the future: that is to say, we can only understand what was and is if we have some knowledge of what will be. Marxism, it can hardly be disputed, would not be Marxism without its claim to "scientific knowledge" of the future, and the question is how far such knowledge is possible. Prediction is, of course, not only a component of many sciences but an inseparable aspect of even the most trivial actions, although we cannot "know" the future in the same way as the past, since all prediction has an element of uncertainty.

The "future" is either what will happen in the next moment or what will happen in a million years; the difficulty of prediction increases, of course, with distance and with the complication of the subject. In social matters, as we know, predictions are especially deceptive, even if they relate to the short term and to a single quantifiable factor, as in demographic prognoses. In general we forecast the future by extrapolating existing tendencies, while realising that such extrapolations are, always and everywhere, of extremely limited value, and that no developmental curves in any field of enquiry extend indefinitely in accordance with the same equation. As to prognoses on a global scale and without any limitation of time, these are no more than fantasies, whether the prospect they offer is good or evil. There are no rational means of predicting "the future of humanity" over a long period or foretelling the nature of "social formations" in ages to come. The idea that we can make such forecasts "scientifically", and that without doing so we cannot even understand the past, is inherent in the Marxist theory of "social formations." It is one reason why that theory is a fantasy, and also why it is politically effective.

The influence that Marxism has achieved, far from being the result or proof of its scientific character, is almost entirely due to its prophetic, fantastic, and irrational elements. Marxism is a doctrine of blind confidence that a paradise of universal satisfaction is awaiting us just round the corner. Almost all the prophecies of Marx and his followers have already proved to be false, but this does not disturb the spiritual certainty of the faithful, any more than it did in the case of chiliastic sects: for it is a certainty not based on any empirical premisses or supposed "historical laws", but simply on the psychological need for certainty. In this sense Marxism performs the function of a religion, and its efficacy is of a religious character. But it is a caricature and a bogus form of religion, since it presents its temporal eschatology as a scientific system, which religious mythologies do not purport to be.

As for the question of continuity between Marxism and its embodiment in Communism, i.e. Leninist-Stalinist ideology and practice: it would be absurd to maintain that Marxism was, so to

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speak, the efficient cause of present-day Communism. On the other hand, Communism is not a mere "degeneration" of Marxism but a possible interpretation of it, and even a well-founded one, though primitive and partial in some respects. Marxism was a combination of values which proved incompatible for empirical though not for logical reasons, so that some could be realised only at the expense of others.

But it was Marx who declared that the whole idea of Communism could be summed up in a single formula—the abolition of private property; that the state of the future must take over the centralised management of the means of production; and that the abolition of capital meant the abolition of wage-labour. There was nothing flagrantly illogical in deducing from this that the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the nationalisation of industry and agriculture would bring about the general emancipation of mankind. In the event it turned out that, having nationalised the means of production, it was possible to erect on this foundation a monstrous edifice of lies, exploitation, and oppression. This was not itself a consequence of Marxism; rather, Communism was a bastard version of the socialist ideal, owing its origin to many historical circumstances and chances, of which Marxist ideology was one.

But it cannot be said that Marxism was "falsified" in any essential sense. Arguments adduced at the present day to show that "that is not what Marx meant" are intellectually and practically sterile. Marx's intentions are not the deciding factor in a historical assessment of Marxism, and there are more important arguments for freedom and democratic values than the fact that Marx, if one looks closely, was not so hostile to those values as might at first sight appear.

MARX TOOK OVER the romantic ideal of social unity, and Communism realised it in the only way feasible in an industrial society, namely, by a despotic system of government. The origin of this dream is to be found in the idealised image of the Greek city-state popularised by Winkelmann and others in the 18th century and subsequently taken up by German philosophers. Marx seems to have imagined that once capitalists were done away with the whole world could become a kind of Athenian *agora*: one had only to forbid private ownership of machines or land and, as if by magic, human beings would cease to be selfish and their interests would coincide in perfect harmony. Marxism affords no explanation of how this prophecy is founded, or what reason there is to think that human interests will cease to conflict as soon as the means of production are nationalised.

Marx, moreover, combined his romantic dreams with the socialist expectation that all needs would be fully satisfied in the earthly paradise. The early socialists seem to have understood the slogan "To each according to his needs" in a limited sense: they meant that people should not have to suffer cold and hunger or spend their lives staving off destitution. Marx, however, and many Marxists after him, imagined that under socialism all scarcity would come to an end. It was possible to entertain this hope in the ultra-sanguine form that all wants would be satisfied, as though every human being had a magic ring or obedient jinn at his disposal. But, since this could hardly be taken seriously, Marxists who considered the question decided, with a fair degree of support from Marx's works, that Communism would ensure the satisfaction of "true" or "genuine" needs consonant with human nature, but not whims or desires of all kinds.

This, however, gave rise to a problem which no one answered clearly: who is to decide what needs are "genuine", and by what criteria?

IF EVERY MAN is to judge this for himself, then all needs are equally genuine provided they are actually, subjectively felt, and there is no room for any distinction. If, on the other hand, it is the state which decides, then the greatest emancipation in history consists in a system of universal rationing.

At the present time it is obvious to all except a handful of New Left adolescents that socialism cannot literally "satisfy all needs" but can only aim at a just distribution of insufficient resources —which leaves us with the problem of defining "just" and of deciding by what social mechanisms the aim is to be effected in each particular case. The idea of perfect equality, i.e. an equal share of all goods for everybody, is not only unfeasible economically but is contradictory in itself. For perfect equality can only be imagined under a system of extreme despotism, but despotism itself presupposes inequality at least in such basic advantages as participation in power and access to information. For the same reason, contemporary *gauchistes* are in an untenable

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position when they demand more equality and less government; in real life more equality means more government, and absolute equality means absolute government.

IF SOCIALISM IS TO BE anything more than a totalitarian prison, it can only be a system of compromises between different values that limit one another. All-embracing economic planning, even if it were possible to achieve—and there is almost universal agreement that it is not—is incompatible with the autonomy of small producers and regional units, and this autonomy is a traditional value of socialism, though not of Marxist socialism. Technical progress cannot coexist with absolute security of living conditions for everyone. Conflicts inevitably arise between freedom and equality, planning and the autonomy of small groups, economic democracy and efficient management, and these conflicts can only be mitigated by compromise and partial solutions.

In the developed industrial countries, all social institutions for the purpose of evening out inequalities and ensuring a minimum of security (progressive taxation, health services, unemployment relief, price controls, etc.) have been created and extended at the price of a vastly expanded state bureaucracy, and no one can suggest how to avoid paying this price.

QUESTIONS SUCH AS THESE have little to do with Marxism, and Marx's doctrine provides virtually no help in solving them. The apocalyptic belief in the consummation of history, the inevitability of socialism, and the natural sequence of "social formations"; the "dictatorship of the proletariat", the exaltation of violence, faith in the automatic efficacy of nationalising industry, fantasies concerning a society without conflict and an economy without money—all these have nothing in common with the idea of democratic socialism. The latter's purpose is to create institutions which can gradually reduce the subordination of production to profit, do away with poverty, diminish inequality, remove social barriers to educational opportunity, and minimise the threat to democratic liberties from state bureaucracy and the seductions of totalitarianism. All these efforts and attempts are doomed to failure unless they are firmly rooted in the value of freedom—what Marxists stigmatise as "negative" freedom, i.e. the area of decision which society allows to the

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individual. This is so not only because freedom is an intrinsic value requiring no justification beyond itself, but also because without it societies are unable to reform themselves: despotic systems, lacking this self-regulating mechanism, can only correct their mistakes when these have led to disaster.

MARXISM has been frozen and immobilised for decades as the ideological superstructure of a totalitarian political movement, and in consequence has lost touch with intellectual developments and social realities. The hope that it could be revived and made fruitful once again soon proved to be an illusion. As an explanatory "system" it is dead, nor does it offer any "method" that can be effectively used to interpret modern life, to foresee the future, or cultivate utopian projections. Contemporary Marxist literature, although plentiful in quantity, has a depressing air of sterility, and helplessness, in so far as it is not purely historical.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF Marxism as an instrument of political mobilisation is quite another matter. As is well known, its terminology is used in support of the most variegated political interests. In the Communist countries of Europe, where Marxism is the official legitimation of the existing régimes, it has virtually lost all conviction, while in China it has been deformed out of recognition.

Wherever Communism is in power, the ruling class transforms it into an ideology whose real sources are nationalism, racism, or imperialism. Communism has done much to strengthen nationalist ideologies by using them to seize power or hold on to it, and in this way it has produced its own gravediggers. Nationalism lives only as an ideology of hate, envy, and thirst for power; as such it is a disruptive element in the Communist world, the coherence of which is based on force. If the whole world were Communist it would either have to be dominated by a single imperialism, or there would be an unending series of wars between the "Marxist" rulers of different countries.

WE ARE WITNESSES and participators in momentous and complicated intellectual and moral processes, the combined effects of which cannot be foreseen. On the one hand, many optimistic assumptions of 19th-century humanism have broken down, and in many fields of culture there is a sense of bankruptcy. On the other hand, thanks to the unprecedented speed and diffusion of information, human aspirations throughout the world are increasing faster than the means of satisfying them; this leads to rapidly growing frustration and consequent aggressiveness.

Communists have shown great skill in exploiting this state of mind and channelling aggressive feelings in various directions according to circumstances, using fragments of Marxist language to suit their purpose. Messianic hopes are the counterpart of the sense of despair and impotence that overcomes mankind at the sight of its own failures. The optimistic belief that there is a ready-made, immediate answer to all problems and misfortunes, and that only the malevolence of enemies (defined according to choice) stands in the way of its being instantly applied, is a frequent ingredient in ideological systems passing under the name of Marxism—which is to say that Marxism changes content from one situation to another and is cross-bred with other ideological traditions.

At present Marxism neither interprets the world nor changes it: it is merely a repertoire of slogans serving to organise various interests, most of them completely remote from those with which Marxism originally identified itself. A century after the collapse of the First International, the prospect of a new International capable of defending the interests of oppressed humanity throughout the world is less likely than it has ever been.

The self-deification of mankind, to which Marxism gave philosophical expression, has ended in the same way as all such attempts, whether individual or collective: it has revealed itself as the farcical aspect of human bondage.

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Letter from South Yemen

Aden, the Desert State

By Peter-Hannes Lehmann

EVERYTHING is "verboten", everything taboo. Even the desert is a state secret. We were driving along the coast road towards the capital, Aden, sand to the right of us, sand to the left of us, a film of sand swirling over the road so that it looked as if the tarmac was steaming, sandstorms darkening the horizon. How much desert adds up to a country? The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen consists of 98% desert—bare, barren earth, desert galore.

Our cavalcade came to a stop: one of the cars in front of us had burst a tyre, and it was a welcome pause even if one's shirt does cling to one's back at once. The air slaps round our ears like a hot wet handkerchief. I got out my camera. I wanted at least to have a photograph of this desert even though there's not much to see—just sand, nothing but sand.

"Hey!" shouts Ali from behind. "Down with that camera! No photographing!" Ali is my permanent shadow, guardian angel and Archangel Gabriel combined, allotted to me by the Communist Party which after all rules the country; and he is to watch out that "nothing happens" to me but also that I do not misbehave myself. Taking photographs, for instance, is a misdemeanour, at least if done without permission—and permission is granted only by the Party in agreement with the Security authorities. Permission to take photographs must be asked for days in advance, and I didn't have specific permission for the desert.

We had been driving through the country for three days, from the solitary oil refinery to the solitary fish-processing factory, from the attractive kindergarten[1] to the prolific tomato beds.

What we are given to see has been selected by the Party months beforehand; it has all been programmed and rehearsed, but if a tyre bursts, so does the protocol.

"*Mensch, mach keinen Scheiss!* (Don't make a balls-up, feller)" Ali says to me imploringly, and puts his hand over the camera.

Ali spent four years near Halle in East Germany studying agriculture and also took an engineering degree there; his colleagues from "State Security" also speak fluent German often with a touching Saxon lilt. As part of its development aid to the People's Republic of Yemen, the "fraternal socialist country of the German Democratic Republic" (Yemen's national title is a faithful copy) has distributed hundreds of scholarships to enlightened Yemenis who are to stand guard in future over the security of their new socialist state. Main purpose: Enemy Surveillance, and for them apparently I am a prime target. "What the hell's so secret about your desert?" I ask Ali. He shrugs his shoulders: "It's *verboten*. Ask Security." They shrug their shoulders too. Finally, one of them points into the endless waste of sand. "Over there", he says, "is an Army post, there behind the sand-dune. It is forbidden to photograph the Army."

The sand-dune is at least ten kilometres away, but argument of any sort is hopeless. What a foreigner is allowed to do in the People's Republic of Yemen is laid down in Law No. 3/76 and this, basically, says that everything is forbidden.

It is forbidden to take photographs of anyone in uniform—whether he is a policeman or a Young Pioneer—unless one has permission from the Party and a watchdog from the Ministry of Information who checks precisely the subject, time, place and duration of any camera-work. In principle permission is given only for a day, or an

[1] The emphasis is all on "youth", not unsurprisingly so since some 60% of the population is under the age of 20. In schools, young teachers are busy indoctrinating the children in the "principles of the Revolution", especially how to defend it against the wicked enemy, weapon in hand. I was allowed to photograph the paintings on the school walls: the blue-clad model children, waving flags and carrying sub-machine guns at the ready. . . .

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hour and only for a specifically defined locality.[2] When the permit expires the locality becomes taboo again. And so it is forbidden to photograph ministries, offices, or bridges. It is forbidden to photograph the port, the vegetable market, or the main street. Any inhabitant who sees a foreigner taking photographs and does not alert the police forthwith, risks landing in prison himself.

One is not allowed to talk to the inhabitants of the People's Republic of Yemen at all. Law No. 3/76 forbids them "any non-approved contact with citizens of foreign nationality"—and that applies even to comrades from "friendly socialist countries." This rule so infuriated the Ambassador of the Chinese People's Republic that he openly used the word "idiocy" at a Western cocktail party: "How am I supposed to help this country build up Communism if I, a Communist, do not even have an opportunity to talk to the people of this country? . . . "

Knowledge means power, however, and the Party, which is still so young and so short of cadres that it keeps its structure and the number of its members a state secret, wants to "know everything" in order to remain in power. Everything has to be discussed and decided in committee; Governmental affairs are directed by a Presidential Council, of which the President, the Party Secretary and the Minister-President are members. Not one of them can decide alone, for individual initiative is "egoism", and an egoist is dangerous.

Sometimes mortally dangerous. Salim Rubai Ali, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen until 27 June this year, paid with his life for his conviction that, after innumerable socialist and communist experiments, his country could risk a cautious diplomatic approach to its pro-Western Arab neighbours. Hardly had Rubai Ali proposed plans on these lines to the Party's Central Committee than his two Council colleagues who were loyal to Moscow—Abdul Fattah Ismail (Secretary-General of the Party) and Ali Nasr Mohammed (the Minister-President)—had the Presidential palace stormed by loyal Party troops from the Militia and the Air Force. Salim Rubai Ali—"traitor" and "individualist"—was forced to abdicate, and he was executed a few hours later. At the behest of Abdul Fattah Ismail, the omnipotent Party leader backed by the Kremlin, his office was was taken over by the faithful Ali Nasr Mohammed.

FEAR RULES THE COUNTRY. Since treachery lurks in detail, there are no maps anywhere in South Yemen, no town plans or telephone books on sale. There are, however, English Bibles, leftovers from the British colonial period which only came to an end a decade ago; there are masses of these in the bookshops, but I found no English-Arab dictionaries. Why should there be if one is not allowed to talk to the Yemenis? Statistics are only to be had from the relevant ministries and my enquiries were generally met with the answer "Unfortunately not available. . . . " Information in South Yemen comes purely by chance.

So I was all the more astonished when one day one of our official Party escorts innocently answered my question as to how strong the Party actually was. There were 6,000 members, he said, of an average age of 26, including 5% academics and about 10% secondary-school graduates.

No wonder that the Party keeps such figures so secret; for they reveal its weak point at once—lack of popular backing. South Yemen, nearly as big as Britain, has barely two million inhabitants, in other words about the same as Hamburg. The decisive factor, however, is not the bare figures but the ratio of rulers (the Party) to ruled (the people): this works out at one Party member to every 333 inhabitants; put the other way round, the Communists represent 0.3% of the population.

An English sociologist to whom I passed on these figures was taken aback with astonishment: "God, that's really top secret—I've been hunting for these figures for two years. I don't think this will do your informant any good. . . .

Unfortunately, it did not. A day later the communicative Yemeni was banished from our convoy back to his Ministry desk and a trip he was due to make abroad was cancelled. "Security", which listens in to every telephone conversation, is in charge of the visitors' list in the hotel and even constructs the furniture and furnishings, had been snooping and had taken appropriate action.

"This country is a steaming prison with invisible bars", a friend says. "You don't see them but you're shut in everywhere. Wherever you go 'Security' is already there. . . . "

He is an Englishman who does not want me to give his name and wants simply to be called "Tom." Tom is in his mid-30s, one of Yemen's

[2] I did manage to take one rare photo, since only a few Westerners have been allowed to visit Tarim and its religious centres in the desert landscape of Hadramaut. Only the whitewashed roofs and pinnacles suggest where the mountain stops and the town, with its brown mud buildings, begins. With 365 mosques—one for every day of the year—Tarim is one of the most sacred of Islam's holy places in Yemen, the only Communist-ruled state in the Arab world.

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many road-construction technicians, and for some eighteen months now his firm has been building a road in the impassable north, a long long way from the capital. Every month Tom comes down to Aden from the desert, gives himself a weekend in the best hotel on the square, the Rock Hotel, and fills himself up with Radeberger lager from Dresden at 80p a bottle.

"My dear chap", Tom says "what a place this was in the old days! Hot, in every sense of the word. In the free port of Aden there were the cheapest watches and cameras in the world, the best girls and the most notorious VD. And today? Nothing but heat and socialism. Today you think yourself lucky to get a kilo of bananas after two hours of queueing. Cars break down because there are no spare parts; houses are collapsing because all the supplies of cement and paint are used for barracks and official buildings. Aden is a filthy hole and the only thing that surprises me is that it manages to get a bit more dilapidated every day. . . ."[3] Tom somehow thinks of Aden as home as much as his real home in Surrey and his conversation is marked with the bitterness of a jilted lover. No wonder: when Aden was still a British colony Tom was one of Her Majesty's sergeants fighting a last battle here for the old Empire—and suffering a humiliating defeat. For five years from 1963 to the end of 1967, the battle went on against the South Yemeni underground guerrillas, who refused to accept that they could at best be second-class citizens in their own lands.

STARTING WITH old German Mausers from the Turkish wars and graduating to hand-grenades and Soviet sub-machine-guns, the rebels attacked the British army of occupation. Their political motives were as varied as their weapons—nationalist sentiment, personal ambition, and avarice flourished alongside liberal-social dreams and a communist sense of mission. The "freedom fighters" were united only on one point—independence from Westminster—and the urban guerrilla war which they waged against the "Tommies" was savage and cruel.

ADEN BECAME INDEPENDENT on 30 November 1967; it hardly became free. After months of internecine warfare between the various factions among the "heroes of freedom", the Left-Socialists and Communists seized power, and it does not look as if they ever intend to give it up—particularly after the putsch against the "pro-Western" President by Party functionaries loyal to Moscow.

"Why should they?" asks Ali, my shadow, innocently. "After all the Party and the government are doing everything for the good of the people." For the good of the people—and for their own peace of mind—the Communist commissars started by disarming every man in the country. Even possession of the traditional "*jhambia*"—the razor-sharp curved dagger in the belt—is forbidden. For the good of the people the oil refinery, most private businesses, most taxis, and practically all private houses were expropriated. For the good of the people the wages paid by the British (£110–£200 per month) were reduced to a state-guaranteed minimum wage of £30–£90 per month; the Democratic Republic of Yemen, plagued by shortages, can scarcely afford higher wages.

The Government and Party dispense newly-constructed dwellings, scholarships, trips abroad, and jobs—after, of course, first checking the orthodoxy of the applicants. The state controls all traffic in gold and currency; anyone who has too much jewellery is suspect; State-owned shops sell materials, food, shoes and radios by quota and at prescribed prices . . . always assuming that there are any of these commodities.

Food is always available but never everything at the same time; sometimes there are four weeks of mutton but no vegetables, then six weeks of chicken, eggs, and tomatoes but no bread and no fish. The state has annexed all managerial positions but communication and cooperation between them frequently falters. How should it be otherwise? Ten years of independence, which on paper has turned even the 75% of illiterates in the country into "fully participating citizens", is too short a time for the man who comes to a city from the desert.

For Omar, the Bedouin boy whom I met in No. 3 "Governorat" (administrative district), the new world of the Democratic People's Republic of Yemen is full of marvels. Omar, aged 14, lives in one of the many boarding schools set up by the

[3] Move out of Aden towards Shibam and Tarim and there are only sand and rocks as far as the eye can see. 99.5% of the entire surface of South Yemen is desert; and as engineers tell me, if all the sources of water in the country were utilised and billions invested in the country's economy, 98% of it would remain barren. The few green patches rank as tourist attractions. And I did pass through one new village's "triumphal gate", an improvised Erector-set contraption on top of which was a life-size model house, every window electrically bright in the evening. In the desert the sight of an electric light is still the ultimate in progressive persuasiveness.

What is decisive of course, is the fact that South Yemen is the only Arab country in which no oil has so far been found.

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government for the children of the 300,000 Bedouin in the country. He is fed and housed free, learns the fundamentals of reading and writing, a bit of history (mostly Communist doctrine), and a little mathematics (without old bourgeois references to money). In the afternoons he learns to shoot, and with a real sub-machine-gun; the "enemies" who are his targets carry dollar notes in their top hats, and Omar finds all that "fun."

Omar's father, he tells me, has a stomach ailment, and previously he had to ride into Aden to buy medicaments from a British doctor for golden *rials*; there were no doctors in the desert, and Omar's father, a sheikh ruling 1,500 Bedouin, could afford it; but the poor died in the desert. Today there are two large hospitals and a dozen health centres in each of the six "Governorates" of the People's Republic of Yemen. There is also a Yemeni national anthem; and women have been emancipated for the first time in the 3,000-year history of the country. Previously, in times of drought, the poor starved beside the camel trek. Anyone remembering this evidently does not mind if there is only rice or dried fish to eat; what counts is the fact that there is something to eat at all. In Bedouin eyes the new world of the People's Republic is a Disneyland.

For Tom, the Englishman who caroused, fought and lost in the duty-free paradise of Aden eleven years ago, the Yemeni People's Republic today is "one great prison." For my companion Ali, who threw hand grenades at the Tommies as a 14-year-old and now is headed straight for a lucrative Party career, the People's Republic is "one great hospital" in which the sick and weak are nursed back to health.

Nevertheless—the inmates are under tutelage. They are all minors, told what to do, cared for, administered, pieces of a Plan. Alternatively they are actually locked up. No functionary disputes the fact that there are political prisoners or, as the Party puts it, "persons from whom the People must be protected." Figures vary between 10,000 and 20,000, but that too is top secret. My impression was strong that Yemen's Party and Government are actuated at least as much by fear as by patriotism—fear of any criticism, fear of foreign countries, fear of their own people, fear of rivals in their own ranks.

Not without reason. South Yemen is one of those corners of the world where for centuries the only really worthwhile possessions have been a good rifle and a well-filled money-bag. In 1934 when Great Britain set out to pacify the Crown Colony's hinterland in order to safeguard the vital harbour of Aden, her emissaries had to conclude no less than 1,400 peace treaties with individual potentates, emirs, and tribal sheikhs in southern Arabia. Most of the tribal sheikhs were simply bribed, with money or privileges; others were pertinently shown how remarkably well a Vickers weapon fires. In any case peace lasted only as long as the money-bag or the machine-gun. The Communist People's Republic of Yemen insists that it is surrounded by ideological foes, the "capitalist states" of North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. It has already waged two bitter border wars with North Yemen, with which it feels it has a relationship similar to that between the West German Federal Republic and East Germany; after the murder of the North Yemen President al-Gashmi by a South Yemen diplomat (on 24 June), a third war seemed imminent. Skirmishes with Saudi Arabian tribes on the northern frontier are the order of the day, and the ten-year guerrilla war with Oman is not yet forgotten.

At an early stage, therefore, the new masters of Aden reinsured via their socialist big brothers. The Soviet Union, represented by some 2,000 "advisers", trains the Army; 300 Cuban instructors are hustling the People's Militia along; and a similar number of comrades from East Germany are instructing the Yemeni secret police in the techniques of intercept, interrogation and long-distance communications.

For years the People's Republic of Yemen has been prepared to pay any political price for all this. Mindful of its own "heroic struggle" against the British, the South Yemenis grant anyone who says that he is a "fighter against capitalist oppression" and for the "freedom of peoples" refuge and aid almost unconditionally, frequently even diplomatic immunity. For instance, asylum was offered to the Palestinian guerrillas and permission to set up their own military training camp. For the same reason (if at the West German government's desperate request) it granted right of domicile and safe conduct to five German terrorists from the "2 June Movement" when they were exchanged for the kidnapped Berlin Christian Democratic leader, Peter Lorenz. It was a gesture which immediately earned the guerrilla state the appellation "nest of terrorists."

Since this incident the members of the South Yemeni government (they are comparatively young—average age 32) have not managed to rid themselves of the charge of conspiring with all the terrorists of this world. They did not even do so by refusing landing rights to the hijackers of the Lufthansa aircraft "Landshut" in October last year. As Mahmoud Abdulla Oshaish, the Minister of Transport, lamented to me: "The People's Republic of Yemen is a respected member of the international community. It has

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passed a law whereby no hijacked aircraft will be permitted to land on Yemeni territory any more. We do not wish our young country, which desires to and must carry out its own Revolution, to be identified with irresponsible terrorist gangs. . . ." In confidence, members of the government indicate that if necessary the next aircraft will simply be shot down before it can force-land (as the Lufthansa "Landshut" did, before flying on to Mogadishu where the hijackers were overwhelmed by Bonn's special battalion). Terrorism against those of different ideological views is no longer necessarily a "freedom struggle" in the eyes of the South Yemenis. But an official veil is still drawn over the mysterious training camps for terrorists.

The Transport Minister intones: "We value good relationships with all countries of good will which wish to live in peace with us. This applies also to the West Europeans although their newspapers brand us as a nest of terrorists. We are a freedom-loving, peaceful country. . . . "

AN ETHIOPIAN acquaintance, with whom I went to a cocktail party in the diplomatic quarter, gave me a lift back to the Rock Hotel. We drove along the promenade. It was shortly after midnight. Suddenly we were held up near the port area—Military Police. "What are you doing here at this time? Where have you come from?" growled the Sergeant in charge. "Make sure you get the hell out! What goes on here has nothing to do with you."

"What goes on here" was loud noises in the background—metal clanking on metal. Men were carrying Russian packing-cases from a Soviet ship which must have arrived that evening (it had not been there in the afternoon). "Weapons", my Ethiopian companion said happily. "Weapons for Ethiopia, so that at last we can be victorious over the reactionaries in Eritrea."

The "reactionaries" in Eritrea are Communist guerrillas who have been fighting for years for their country's independence—previously against the troops of the "capitalist" and "imperialist" Emperor Haile Selassie, today against the Marxist-Leninist-orientated army of Ethiopia's new Revoluntionary Council. Ethiopian Communists are fighting Eritrean Communists with Communist weapons delivered via a Communist country.

Ali, my shadow, has no difficulty in understanding the dialectics of this confused situation. "That", he says, "is a question of superior consciousness", or, in the Marxianised German which he learned in Communist East Germany, "*Das ist eine Frage des höheren Bewusstseins. . . .* " But he is not allowed to say exactly what that means. "The law forbids it", he says.

Yes, of course—Law No. 3/76.

Kites

Our lives fly well—white specks with faces
Running out against blue. While far below
We stand and stare, trying to remember them.
What were they like, these prize possessions of ours,
Unravelling so cheerfully before our eyes?

By now we are winding in the runaway spools
For all we are worth. Whatever was there
Has begun to recede, like the dead stars,
Faster than the speed of their light can reach
Back to us here, where we hang on these empty strings.

Hugo Williams

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LETTERS

The Two Minds of Mr Kennan

RICHARD PIPES AND LEOPOLD LABEDZ deserve high praise for their rebuttals to George Kennan's re-assessment of his stand on Soviet-American relations (ENCOUNTER, March-April, July-Sept., 1978). Kennan seems to be today's leading example of how an eminent scholar-diplomat can be wrong-headed in his reasoning. As an example, let me cite this gem, culled from an *Oral History Interview* undertaken by Louis Fischer on 23 March 1965, the text of which is to be found in the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library (Waltham, Massachusetts). In the late summer of 1960 (17 August), Kennan undertook to write a long letter to John Kennedy, making a number of recommendations as to the line the Democratic Party's candidate for the Presidency should take in the realm of foreign affairs:

> "The needed curtailment of our world commitments gives opportunities for initiative, but it should be balanced by a strengthening of our defense posture, particularly in conventional weapons. The main target of our diplomacy should be to heighten the divisive tendencies within the Soviet bloc. The best means to do this lies in the improvement of our relations with Moscow."

Just how the improvement of Uncle Sam's relations with the Central and East European jail-keeper could encourage the restlessness of the captives is not explained, and doubtless never will be. But as a philosophico-political *non sequitur*, this tranquil even-handed statement would be hard to beat.

Paris CURTIS CATE

"You Saxon, Me Norman"

STEPHEN TOULMIN'S brilliant "You Saxon, Me Norman" (ENCOUNTER, September) needs only a military and brief footnote. After all it all started with armies and conquest.

As late as 1940, after the Fall of France, when the *Blitzkrieg*, organised to the degree that men of the same tank unit were of the same blood group to facilitate transfusions, had brilliantly proved itself, candidates for Officer Selection at Catterick were still being asked, "*Do you hunt?*"

At the other end of the War came the Labour landslide. It is debatable whether Churchill, who wept, or the Communist Party of Great Britain (which had been calling for a "National Government with Left Labour and Communist Participation") were the more startled. The pundits and psephologists have been pondering ever since. OUT OF BOUNDS TO OTHER RANKS gives the simple answer. This blunt slogan of caste apartheid did more to stir torpid erks from their wankers and set them trudging resentfully over to the Company Office to register a vote for Labour than the doctrines of Karl Marx or all the stirring speeches of Mr Clement Attlee.

Somewhere in Europe, late 1944. Amid the smoke skirmishers of the posher Infantry mobs kick in the doorways of bars and wine shops. Battle Red Caps arrive outside the jewellers' shops at the ready to shoot looters and the Medical Corps start pumping morphine into the louder screaming of the wounded. Among the earliest of them all, quietly, tactfully, move bodies of senior batmen, often under the command of a junior officer, as anxious to prove himself as the younger Bolkonsky, towards the best hotel and the lushest villas there to smack up OUT OF BOUNDS TO OTHER RANKS—*Clause One of the Atlantic Charter,* as the troops used to call it.

DAVE WALLIS

Wivenhoe,
Essex

Malinowski

ANTHONY QUINTON (ENCOUNTER, October), apparently relying on Perry Anderson (*New Left Review*), includes Malinowski in a list of "refugees from Hitler's Europe", and, by implication, of "right-wing fugitives" who "stayed here." Malinowski came to London in 1910 after reading J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* and finding inspiration in its theories. He went to America in 1938, and he died there in 1942.

LUCY MAIR

London

Eric Roll & Max Weber

IN HIS DISMAL REPORT on the Future of Economics (ENCOUNTER, July), Lord Roll makes two passing and, for me, gnomic references to Max Weber.

In one passage he writes that the elegance of Walras's work, though hailed by Schumpeter, has had no significant impact on the purposes of economics, especially as compared with the "amateurish" old *Wealth of Nations.* And then he continues, immediately:

> "Only the not altogether helpful influence of Max Weber's theory of the social sciences could lead on to a different conclusion."

In a later section, he returns to the theme that "very little indeed in the literature of pure economics" appears to have much relevance, and dismisses the argument that any pure theory necessarily has to simplify a complex reality. He then goes on to state:

> "This is, of course, a process of exclusion and as such makes it easy enough, with Max Weber, so to define Economics as to elide the problems I have stated."

All this baffles me. I don't know what Weber's "theory" might mean, since I doubt that he wrote a unified theory. Weber was concerned with the nature and types of rationality, and its limitations. The conclusions of his sad "Protestant Ethic" essay foretell a world that has lost a sense of transcendence and leave us in a world of specialists without spirit

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and sensualists without heart. His descriptions of rationalisation—as the major process of modern industrial thought, pervading as it does all realms of life—are among the most acute writings we have. And Weber was the foremost theorist of Bureaucracy, predicting, even, that a Socialist state, in trying to manage an economy, would necessarily be more bureaucratic than a capitalist enterprise. No news now, perhaps; but a formidable statement sixty years ago when socialism was identified with progress.

But my intention, truly, is not to debate with Eric Roll; I may have been carried away by my own appreciation of Weber. It was simply to find out what he meant by those sentences. For someone who thinks that sociology is even more dismal than economics, such clarification is necessary.

DANIEL BELL

Harvard University

I AM SORRY if I have unwittingly attacked one of Daniel Bell's heroes. I may not be as much of a devotee of Max Weber as he is but I certainly have a high regard for Weber's contribution to the philosophy of the social sciences.

What I had in mind was a remark of Weber's, which has had (and probably was intended to have) a special relevance to economics, namely that the function of social science is to provide "aspects and judgements which are not empirical reality nor pictures of it; but which allow us to arrange it intellectually in a valid manner. . . . " This, apart from being question-begging, gives, I believe, powerful support to the more arid aspects of economics.

ERIC ROLL

House of Lords
London

The Argument about Nuremberg

On the Neo-Nazi Come-back . . . By BRADLEY F. SMITH

ROBERT KEMPNER has provided ENCOUNTER readers with a ten-point summary of what might be called the traditional defence of the Nuremberg trials. Tucked away in the middle of his points [August] Dr Kempner notes that "political and personal friends of the Nuremberg war criminals started their anti-Nuremberg lobby immediately in 1945" and goes on to assert that today such "friends of mass murderers and exploiters" are spreading "their vicious propaganda . . . bagatellising and even denying the Holocaust."

I agree with Dr Kempner that this is exactly what has happened; but I would like to underscore the importance of the sequence in which these two developments occurred. Nazi sympathisers did not initially try to mount a general defence of Nazism and the Third Reich; instead they struck at what they considered the weakest point in the Allies' anti-Nazi front. Despite their many positive features, and the spirited support of men like Dr Kempner, Nuremberg proceedings did have serious flaws. By hammering at these shortcomings and decrying Allied "atrocities" and the evils of Communism, Nazi sympathisers gradually clouded the issues and ultimately took much of the initiative away from the foes of Hitler's Germany. This process has now developed so far that we are faced with the ultimate obscenity of respected opinion-makers giving serious attention to the claim that no mass murder of Jews ever occurred.

If one asks the obvious question of how such a development could happen, the initial and basic answer seems to be that in a society such as ours—diverse, rapidly changing, energised by mass communication—no opinion, political persuasion, or popular lunacy can be so completely discredited as to guarantee that it will not surface again under different circumstances. Nuremberg and other "purification" programmes, such as de-Nazification, attempted to run head on against this hallmark of our time. They sought to finish Hitlerism for good-and-all in 1945/1949, but in pursuing this shadow they fell victim to the dangers inherent in overkill. They stretched a point here, indulged in historical/legal fictions there, and were forced to accept some inconsistencies and injustices in pursuit of the hope that they could snuff out Nazism's claims to an afterlife.

But nothing seems to trouble the mid-20th-century mind and conscience as much as a charge of hypocritical morality or the existence of a tainted judge; and the Hitlerites were quick to recognise that Nuremberg was their best chance. Pious laments about Allied immorality and inconsistency soon filled the air, and the revitalisation of Nazism was on its way. Now 30 years later we huddle in the middle of a rising anti-Semitic/anti-Zionist tide, pelted by cloudbursts of Skokie marchers, neo-Nazi parties, and assorted right-wing apologists. If we try to turn back these waters by invoking the magic words of Nuremberg cited by Dr Kempner, such as "war criminals", "aggressors", perpetrators of "genocide" and "crimes against humanity", we are only met and muddled further by counter-cries of "victor's justice", hypocrisy, and a rigged trial.

PROFESSOR BRADLEY F. SMITH *is the author of "Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg: The Untold Story of How the Nazi War Criminals were Judged", discussed by Donald C. Watt in his article on "Nuremberg Reconsidered"* (ENCOUNTER, May). *The remarks by Dr Kempner, former US Deputy Prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials, appeared in August.*

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CLEARLY NUREMBERG IS NOT NOW a forensic instrument that works against neo-Nazism. The present friends of Hitler cut their argumentative teeth on the issues of War Crimes trials; diatribes against Nuremberg fill their publications, and are one of their major devices for deflecting charges against Hitler and the Third Reich. If one wishes to do battle with right-wing racism, it seems to me that it would be advisable to keep the focus on contemporary issues and the record of Nazism. After three decades, Nuremberg can be allowed to retire from the fray, and should now become the object of serious historical study.

BRADLEY F. SMITH

Cabrillo College
Aptos, California

Evensong at Peterborough

PHILIP TOYNBEE writes (in the October ENCOUNTER) of the Evensong he attended in Peterborough Cathedral as muffled by the Old Testament Reading—"the bewildering intrusion of Gideon and the god of tribal vengeance." I would suggest that in the story of Gideon "physical and political power" in Old Testament terms of tribal vengeance is of no avail. Gideon, for instance, when called on to deliver Israel from the hand of Midian, says "wherewith shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." It is this carnal insufficiency which the Lord would use for his purpose. Again, in the event, Gideon and his small band of followers effect a deliverance in which the innumerable host of Midian "like locusts for multitude" "set every man's sword against his neighbour and against all the host", and so defeat themselves. The story suggests that the deliverance is brought about, not by power and might (as the Old Testament world understands them) but by the reverse.

FRANK BUCHANAN

Godalming
Surrey

ALTHOUGH PHILIP TOYNBEE starts with admirable motives, that is, a Christianity relevant to the needs of our day, he soon begins to make wrong assumptions. Surely one of the causes of the decline of Christianity has been its departure from its Biblical normative base. Too much has been conceded to Modernist Biblical scholars. Let Christians not just assume the Bible to be fallible, but contend for its infallibility; for if the Word of God is not infallible then what are our standards, not only in the realm of religion, but also in metaphysics, morals, epistemology, etc.?

Mr Toynbee also suffers from that great human weakness of pride. Why should not God refuse to conform to our conceptions of Him? God is not a projection of ourselves. The Scripture clearly teaches (in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament) that before man there was God and that God has spoken in His Word. Thus where God's love and His wrath clash there is no contradiction but rather a paradox. Paradoxes are hard things for men to swallow as we wish to understand all.

There is also another issue.

By what logical basis does Mr Toynbee justify his highly eclectic Scripture quotations which are supposed to back his case, while rejecting some which palpably destroy such an idea? How does Mr Toynbee feel about Christ Himself stating that God created the world as described in Genesis, and about Christ quoting widely from the Old Testament? Obviously He had no problem with the "Old Testament concept of God."

Mr Toynbee is asking the right questions but providing all the wrong answers. Let us learn from the Reformation and its two great mottos in order that we may have a truly dynamic Twentieth Century Christianity: "Scripture Alone" and "Always Reforming" (in the light of the Scripture), to meet the requirements of today in the light of Scriptural norms.

R. L. WARD

Oakley
Bedfordshire

Hadrian & Bernstein

YOUR JUNE ISSUE was—would "nostalgic" be the word? Anything on Venice immediately inspires thoughts of its most avid "son" of modern times: Frederick Rolfe. As Fr. Rolfe, he wrote *Hadrian the Seventh*, in which Eduard Bernstein's name is given as "Steinbern, the lawyer." *Hadrian* was set in the time element of 1910. And, in the book, the Kaiser rails against the "treacherous pseudophilanthropists" of the German Social Democrats. The Kaiser exclaims that "Their object was not the improvement of the social conditions of the people: it was personal aggrandisement. He brought proofs from his portfolio. . . . Steinbern had sold the minute books of various Socialist committees in Hanover for M.300,000." (The books were produced by an imperial aide.) Not only does *Hadrian*, written in 1903, show a clear, even a prophetic insight to history; but Hadrian VII's rearranging of the boundaries of European countries, in Chapter XI, is a foretaste of the Nazi régime only some three decades later. This side of Rolfe as astute student of history is scarcely seen by the many who merely revel in his paranoiac eccentricities.

DONALD WEEKS

London

Elective Dictatorship

UNFORTUNATELY, we here in the States who receive our ENCOUNTER by surface mail may find that, on occasion, our opportunity to respond to issues raised therein becomes dated before we have the chance to compose a letter. However, the article by Max Beloff (ENCOUNTER, January) will most certainly provide the overseas reader sufficient time to respond, as it appears totally impossible that the issues which it raises are to be resolved in the near future.

Indeed, we in the States view the present Government as being "an elective dictatorship"; by comparison to our own system of government there can be but

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none other conclusion. As Sir Ivor Jennings so directly stated the problem: "... Parliament may remodel the British Constitution, prolong its own life, legislate ex post facto, legalise illegalities ... give dictatorial powers to the Government ... entirely without legal restriction." Therefore, when Mr Beloff tells us that "... the constitution can only function if all sides show restraint ...", there can be no question that the political stability and validity of any given Government rests solely upon their self-restraint in Britain. And, as recent history shows us, this is not the case. All that I can say is: God save the minority. It is perhaps this latter point which is most displeasing, as the continuity of Parliamentary legislation over the years demonstrates a total disregard for consequence. The result being that a given Government (most markedly that of Labour) exercises its power to the extent that it affects the rights of, not only living British subjects, but, also, those not yet born—in the sense that their legislation is becoming irreversible by peaceful means.

Thus, when Lord Hailsham and Sir Leslie Scarman wish to advise us of the far-reaching ramifications of the authority of Parliament they are, in effect, calling for reform. With each delay the possibility of the irreversible effect of present legislation, and the likelihood of "entrenchment", becomes a purely rhetorical question. Is a Federation, as in the American experience, the answer for Great Britain? Equal representation is the cry which is being heard—if only to quash the screams for "devolution." If Britain wants to attain a full standard of democracy, a written constitution and a Bill of Rights providing for greater representation and safeguarding individual liberties surely must be achieved.

BERNARD I. TURNOY

Chicago
Illinois

Nietzsche & Lawrence

AN OFT-REPEATED PLEA is for critics to dare reveal of themselves as do their victims. Sometimes they do; but oh so ingenuously. I refer to George Watson's pastiche (in ENCOUNTER, December) upon D. H. Lawrence. I lack both skill and patience to attempt a critique, but I completely uphold all that Michael Tanner has asserted in response; and I hope that ENCOUNTER justifies its claim to courageous neutrality by publishing this response. The conflict between these men is no merely theoretical squabble; but essentially a difference in commitment well articulated by Nietzsche when he states that

> "What separates two people most profoundly is a different sense and degree of cleanliness. What avails all decency and mutual usefulness and good will toward each other—in the end the fact remains: 'They can't stand each other's smell!' " (*Beyond Good and Evil*, section 271).

I hardly need mention how apposite is section 275 in the same work.

JONATHAN TOKELEY

University College
London

Henry Adams on Bernstein

IN RE Robert Wistrich's appreciation of Eduard Bernstein (ENCOUNTER, June), I thought you would be interested in the comment of Henry Adams, the dour patrician historian, on first looking into Bernstein's Marx. In a letter to his brother Brooks Adams (from Paris, 5 November 1899), Henry Adams writes:

> I have been pick-axeing into the socialist book you sent me, with the utmost interest. Bernstein is, I suppose, a Jew like the rest, and a German Jew at that, with a preposterous German jargon of philosophy and a style worse than impossible; but he seems to prove that he is very much in my intellectual condition. He throws up the sponge in the whole socialist fight. Absolutely nothing is left of Karl Marx except his economical theory of history in its crudest form. I have long noticed that the Socialists were dividing, but Bernstein proves that they're of rather small account even when united. Such an *éreintement* of one's own party is uncommon. Bernstein not only argues, but proves, that the Marxian theory of a social cataclysm has been abandoned, and that the Socialist has no choice but to make himself a *petit bourgeois*, with all the capitalistic machinery and methods. He preaches the bankruptcy of the only idea that our time has produced.
>
> To have lived through that phase of thought is another soothing step to the grave. I can now with fair confidence formulate Marx's theory of history as, "the survival of the cheapest until it becomes too cheap to survive." We are pretty cheap already, but the Trades Union is cheaper. Even an exceptionally intelligent socialist like Bernstein is only beginning to suspect how much cheaper socialism is than he and Marx and Engels and Lasalle were.
>
> In short, anarchy is apparently very far off yet. I should say that the machine could run many centuries on that time-schedule.
>
> So with the capitalists. They have abandoned their old teachers and principles, and have adopted socialist practices. There seems to be no reason why the capitalist should not become a socialist functionary. Solidarity is now law. Every day, I am more struck with the steadiness of the markets in face of conditions which, sixty years ago, would have convulsed Europe with terror. The fact is, I am too

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old. I belong to the nineteenth century. The world is travelling in the twentieth, and doesn't know it.

All the same, I revert to my political platform of last year. The only possible political party must stand on a well-defined platform of State Socialism. Nothing else can reflect the social movement.

Bernstein has taught me, too, what Hegelianism is. I knew I was a Hegelian, but never knew what it was. Now I see that a Hegelian is one who agrees that everybody is right, and who acts as if everybody but himself were wrong. What a delightful idea—so German—that Karl Marx thought himself a Hegelian! It is equal to Wagner's philosophy.

SOCINUS GRELOT

Chilmark
Massachusetts

Michael Polanyi

A MAJOR PART OF Michael Polanyi's papers is now in the Joseph Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago. These are the papers that were in his possession in Oxford, but no systematic effort has been made so far to collect correspondence, manuscripts and memorabilia from people with whom he was in touch. The question as to how to collect this material comes at a time when a biography is being undertaken by Professor W. T. Scott of the University of Nevada in Reno. In the effort to combine the advantages of having original documents available for scholarly use at a centre in Britain, with access to the material by the biographer, and ultimate deposit of copies in the Chicago archive, we wish to make the following request.

We ask anyone possessing such material to get copies made, and to send the originals to Miss Cicely

The End of an

I WOULD LIKE *to reply to Mr Leonard Mosley's article* "New Facts on Suez". *Before doing so I must remind your readers that Mr Mosley asserted that Capt. Liddell-Hart came to No. 10 Downing Street as "a military expert and adviser" at the time of the seizure of the Suez Canal by Nasser because my husband had requested him to write "an outline of how a military campaign should be fought in Egypt," that he was asked by my husband to rewrite this four times and that eventually the Prime Minister threw an inkpot at Capt. Liddell-Hart who riposted by putting a Government-issue wastepaper basket over the Prime Minister's head.*

The head of the Prime Minister's Private Office, Sir Frederick Bishop, has already written to express the view of all the members of the Private Office that these grotesque incidents described by Mr Mosley did not take place. This view is supported by the Prime Minister's Private Secretary at that time. (Incidentally, there are no Government-issue wastepaper baskets in the Cabinet Room.)

THE SECOND POINT **concerns the military plan. There is no record of any military plan among the Liddell-Hart papers deposited at Kings College, London, let alone one requested by the Prime Minister, though there are some "Notes on Suez Crisis, July 1956." Furthermore, there are no records of a Liddell-Hart plan, or even these notes, among my husband's papers in the various places where they are deposited.**

If there had been a plan requested by the Prime Minister from Capt. Liddell-Hart (unlikely, as Mr Mosley will agree, in view of my husband's opinion of the Captain), the Prime Minister would have sent it on to the Minister of Defence, who has absolutely no recollection of anything of the sort, and to the Chiefs of Staff. Of the two Chiefs of Staff consulted, one describes Capt. Liddell-Hart's role as "an hallucination" (whether on the part of the Captain or of Mr Mosley I am not quite sure). The opinion of the second Chief of Staff is best left unprinted.

IT IS TRUE *that my husband and I entertained Mr Mosley more than once, and also Mrs Mosley; but the words Mr Mosley puts in quotes as my husband's at a dinner at our house in Barbados, and I repeat them for the benefit of your readers, "the fellow produced absolute poppycock, I had to keep getting him to re-write it," are, in the opinion of his friends and myself, totally not of his own idiom. Poppycock is a favourite word with Mr Mosley, I believe, and I would like to borrow it to describe this conversation.*

Your readers will note that, in his reply to Sir Frederick Bishop's letter, Mr Mosley has changed his previous positive assertions of fact into "rumours circulating in London at the time."

Voltaire wrote that history is a pack of tricks we play upon the dead. How right he was.

CLARISSA AVON

THE LETTERS *from the Countess of Avon (Anthony Eden's widow) and from A. Liddell Hart appeared in the* "Sunday Telegraph" *following the publication of an article on the events of the Suez crisis extracted from Leonard Mosley's "Dulles: A Biography of Eleanor, Allen and John Foster Dulles" (Hodder & Stoughton). Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart died in 1970; see the memoir by Professor Michael Howard in* ENCOUNTER *(June 1970).*

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Argyle, 12 Sunderland Avenue, Oxford. She will acknowledge receipt, and will deliver the material to the Contemporary Scientific Archives Centre in Oxford. This Centre, under the direction of Professor Margaret Gowing, will process and catalogue the material and deliver it for permanent deposit to the Bodleian Library.

The making of copies before entrusting documents to the post is clearly important. The biographer would appreciate having these copies sent to him, and undertakes to see that when he has made use of them they will finally be sent to the archive in Chicago to fill out that collection. He would also appreciate receiving any recollections and memorabilia, as well as suggestions of other sources of material. His address is: Professor W. T. Scott, Department of Physics, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557, U.S.A.

G. N. Burkhardt
W. Mansfield Cooper
Drusilla Scott
Todd
Alister Hardy
Robin Hodgkin
Arthur Koestler
T. F. Torrance
Veronica Wedgwood

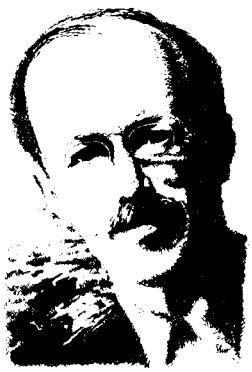
Terrorism and Prudence

Golo Mann—lucidly as always—expresses brilliant thoughts ("Our Anti Terrorist Illusions", Encounter, July). But he demonstrates that he, too, is a victim of terrorism: rather than spelling out the name of the Head of Libya, Colonel Muamar Quadaffi, he prudently refers to the notorious activities of "the leader of a North African state whose name everyone can guess."

Ehud Avriel

Kibbutz Neot Mordechai
Upper Galilee
Israel

Anecdote (alas!)



What my father, **Sir Basil Liddell Hart, would have found most improbable about the story of his encounter at No. 10 Downing Street, with the late Earl of Avon (Sir Anthony Eden as he then was) is the incidental reference to his "off-white" linen suiting.**

He would surely have presented himself at the Prime Minister's residence whatever his doubts about the suitability of the occupant, in the black suit and complementary "Anthony Eden" hat which he customarily wore in the capital even on the hottest occasion.

This sartorial solecism does not necessarily invalidate the report of the encounter, based, it is admitted, on what my father had allegedly mentioned to friends of the author long ago. One must be reminded, however, of what my father has written, in "Why Don't We Learn from History?" *(Allen & Unwin): "The study of war history is especially apt to dispel any illusions—about the reliability of men's testimony and their accuracy in general even apart from the shaping of facts to suit the purposes of propaganda."*

The report of the conflict *is also* tactically *improbable. My father was 6 foot 4 inches tall and must have been hit by the ink-well at several yards in the Drawing Room (or possibly the Cabinet Room below). To seize the waste-paper basket and place it on the Prime Minister's head he would have had to advance rapidly, having lost the advantage of surprise, and then lower himself to where a WPB is normally situated, behind or adjacent to the desk or table, thus exposing his flank to a second strike from a PM he had reason to believe was both dangerous and desperate.*

My father could be **an irritating man. I was inclined, regrettably, to throw things at him in early years. I had only a passing acquaintance with Lord Avon, but I am told by those who worked for him that he could be an irritable man. It was not, however, in my father's nature to have risked the retaliatory move described, clearly contrary, too, to the principles enunciated in his own** New Methods of Infantry Training **(Cambridge University Press, 1918),** The Strategy of the Indirect Approach **(Faber, 1941), etc. Nor do I judge that it was in Lord Avon's nature to risk an assault on one who was not an employee (how, in the first place, could he have got my father to re-write a report?) but a man of most independent position.**

Moreover, *my father was always armed with a small diary in which he invariably recorded the day's events, and pertinent remarks. He also kept copies of the memoranda with which he bombarded people at all distances, as Mr William Clark, the Prime Minister's Public Relations Adviser at the time, can testify. As far as I can ascertain, no such records or copies, relating to this encounter with Eden over the Suez crisis, were ever kept.*

A. Liddell Hart

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AUTHORS

Florence C. Lewis teaches English at Lowell High School in San Francisco. She has published articles in various journals of education, and her fiction has appeared in both general and literary magazines.

Bruno Bettelheim's "The Holocaust" will be included in his forthcoming book *Surviving, and Other Essays*, to be published in the Spring by Alfred A. Knopf. Among his other books are *The Informed Heart* (1960), *Children of the Dream* (1969) and a study of fairy tales, *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976). He contributed a previous article to ENCOUNTER (November 1974) on "Janet & Mark & the New Illiteracy."

Louis de Jong's account of life in Sobibor, translated by Arnold Pomerans, is based on his wide researches into the Nazi concentration-camp system, on interviews with Dutch survivors shortly after 1945, on an article by Adam Rutkowski, published in 1965 in the (Polish language) *Bulletin of the Polish War-Crimes Commission*, and on an unpublished manuscript by Miriam Novitch, of the Kibbutz of the Ghetto-Fighters in Israel, recording information she gathered in 1964 from non-Dutch survivors of Sobibor. Finally, he has incorporated some details from the book *NS-Vernichtungslager* (*Nazi Extermination-Camps*) by Adalbert Rückerl (published by Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich), which gives a slightly different version of the events surrounding the revolt. These differences, however, are only of a minor nature.

Richard Lowenthal was, until his recent retirement, Professor of International Relations at the Free University in West Berlin. His latest book is *Model or Ally? Communist Powers and the Developing Countries* (Oxford University Press, 1977). Among his many articles in ENCOUNTER are "Dealing with Soviet Global Power" (June 1978), "On the Disaffection of Western Intellectuals" (July 1977), and "Can Communism Offer an Alternative World Order?" (April 1977).

Maurice Cranston was Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics from 1969–1978. He is now Director of the European University Institute in Florence. His books include *Rousseau's Social Contract* (Penguin, 1967), *Politics and Ethics* (1972), and *The Mask of Politics* (Allen Lane, 1973).

Claude Roy is on the staff of *Le Nouvel Observateur* in Paris.

Donald MacRae is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics, and author of *Ideology and Society* (1960), *Ages and Stages* (Athlone Press, 1973), and *Max Weber* (Fontana Modern Masters, 1974).

John Eggleston is Professor of Education and Head of the Education Department at the University of Keele. He was a member of the Schools Council Working Party on the Whole Curriculum from 1970–74, and is a member of the Educational Research Board of the Social Science Research Council. His publications include *Contemporary Research in the Sociology of Education* (Methuen, 1974), *The Ecology of the School* (Methuen, 1977) and *The Sociology of the School Curriculum* (Routledge, 1977).

Julius Gould is Professor of Sociology at the University of Nottingham. His Comte Memorial Lecture, *The Rational Society*, was published by Athlone Press in 1972, and in 1975 he co-edited *Studies in Jewish Demography: Survey for 1969–71.*

Philip Abrams is Professor of Sociology at the University of Durham. He is the author of *Origins of British Sociology 1834–1914* (University of Chicago Press, 1969) and co-author of *Communes, Sociology and Society* (1976), published by Cambridge University Press, who this year brought out *Towns in Societies*, of which he is co-editor. He has also edited *Work, Urbanism and Inequality*, published this summer by Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Leszek Kolakowski is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and has been a visiting Professor at the Universities of Montreal, Yale, and California. His article in this issue is taken from his three-volume work, *Main Currents of Marxism*, translated by P. S. Falla and just published by Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press.

P.-H. Lehmann is a foreign correspondent for *Stern* Magazine (Hamburg).

THE *Letters* and *Essays* of E. B. White, edited by Dorothy L. Guth, which were reviewed in ENCOUNTER by **D. J. Enright** ("Laurels or Brussels Sprouts?", April 1978), are now available from Harper & Row in a British edition (£8.95 and £6.95).

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Bonn

CASH-NEXUS: New one-hundred D-Mark bank notes go into circulation today in East Berlin and the East German Communist Republic. Their colour is blue. The engraved portrait on the new banknote is that of Karl Marx.

DIE WELT

Breitenbach

NAMES: *Like many other towns in the border region of Alsace, tiny Breitenbach (pop. 800) has changed nationality five times since the 17th century, as wars and treaties shifted it back and forth between Germany and France. Though most of the towns-people are of German extraction, nearly everyone is bilingual, and official town notices are issued in both the Germanic Alsatian dialect and French. Mayor Pierre Dillenseger has rekindled ancient enmities by proposing to name the streets in French, an act viewed by many of his constituents as an attempt to deny them their Teutonic heritage.*

An anonymous self-proclaimed "liberation committee" promptly announced that it would oppose any attempt to Frenchify Breitenbach. The committee's first act; a midnight assault on road signs along the main highway, where members sought to mock the mayor by covering the name Breitenbach (German for "widebrook") with adhesive stickers renaming the town in French "Large Rivière." Committee leaflets demanded that Dillenseger change his own name, derived from the German Dielen *(planks) and* Säger *(one who cuts), to the French Scieur des Planches. Members of the town council who voted for the new signs were urged to translate their names into French—much to the ire of Council Member Maurice Witz, the local baker, whose family name (German for joke) is rendered in French as Farce.*

Local traditionalists predicted that any new street signs would not survive a single night. One reason for such bitterness: Dillenseger's proposed signs would not bear French translations of the historic German street names, but would instead substitute common French street names—such as Rue de l'Église (Church Street) and Tilleul (Linden) —for earthy oldtimers like Kriegersmatt (Field of the Warriors) and Suppendorf (Village of Soups).

TIME MAGAZINE

London

PATRIOTIC BULL?: The ejaculation "What price the bulldog breed?" was uttered with the most bitter contempt. For the sturdy, intrepid, tenacious animal with whom we choose to identify is as mythical as the dragon [Honor Tracy writes]. The real article is one of the soppiest creatures alive, overflowing with maudlin, misplaced goodwill, craving approval, a canine do-gooder and smug withal. His name has nothing to do with bulls but, derived from the French "*boule*", refers to his round, thick and brainless head. His alarming grunts and grimaces are involuntary and devoid of significance; and if at times he does hang on, it is simply because the cut of his jaw makes it easier to do so than not.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Belgrade

HIGH ARGUMENT: *In a book of Enver Hoxha's memoirs he recalled how his delegation stormed out of the Kremlin, slamming the door in Mr Khrushchev's face, in November 1960. At the end of that meeting there was heated debate about a remark made by Mr Khrushchev:*

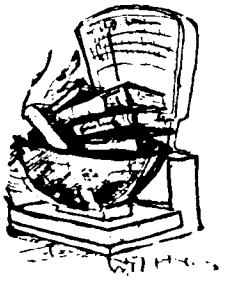
Khrushchev: *You flare up in anger. You spat on me. No one can talk to you.*
Hoxha: *You always say that, we are hot-headed.*
Khrushchev: *You distort my words. Does your interpreter know Russian?*
Hoxha: *Don't carp at the interpreter, she knows Russian very well. I respect you and you should respect me.*
Khrushchev: *That is just how Macmillan wanted to talk to me.*
Shehu *(Prime Minister of Albania): Comrade Hoxha is not Macmillan, so take that back.*
Khrushchev: *But where shall I put it?*
Shehu: *Put it in your pocket.*

THE TIMES

London

DEFINITION: "If the World Cup passes off peacefully then there will be a danger of Argentina losing definition in the public mind."

NEW STATESMAN



London

DISPOSABLE BOOK-SHOP: *The disposable book, the paperback, has been with us some time. Michael Reynolds is perfecting the disposable bookshop.*

After starting with capital of £2,000, he says turnover is now running at £400,000 a year within 10 months of starting. After a day behind the counter of his Manchester shop Reynolds told me:

"I don't want to be an expert on books. Once you become an expert you become emotional about them. I'm a trader, and I am treating them as a commodity. If they sell a lot, I buy a lot."

Reynolds has a chain of about six shops in London and the provinces at any one time. He sells all the remaindered books at 40p and when he thinks the area's book buyers are sated—usually after four or five months—he closes down the shop.

THE TIMES

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Expert. Positive. Controversial.
And never never dull.

Bernard Levin on Drama.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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